CASH GORMAN

JUNE '41

(THE WIZARD)

A STREET & SMITH PUBLICATION

SABOTAGE

By Phil R. Sheridan

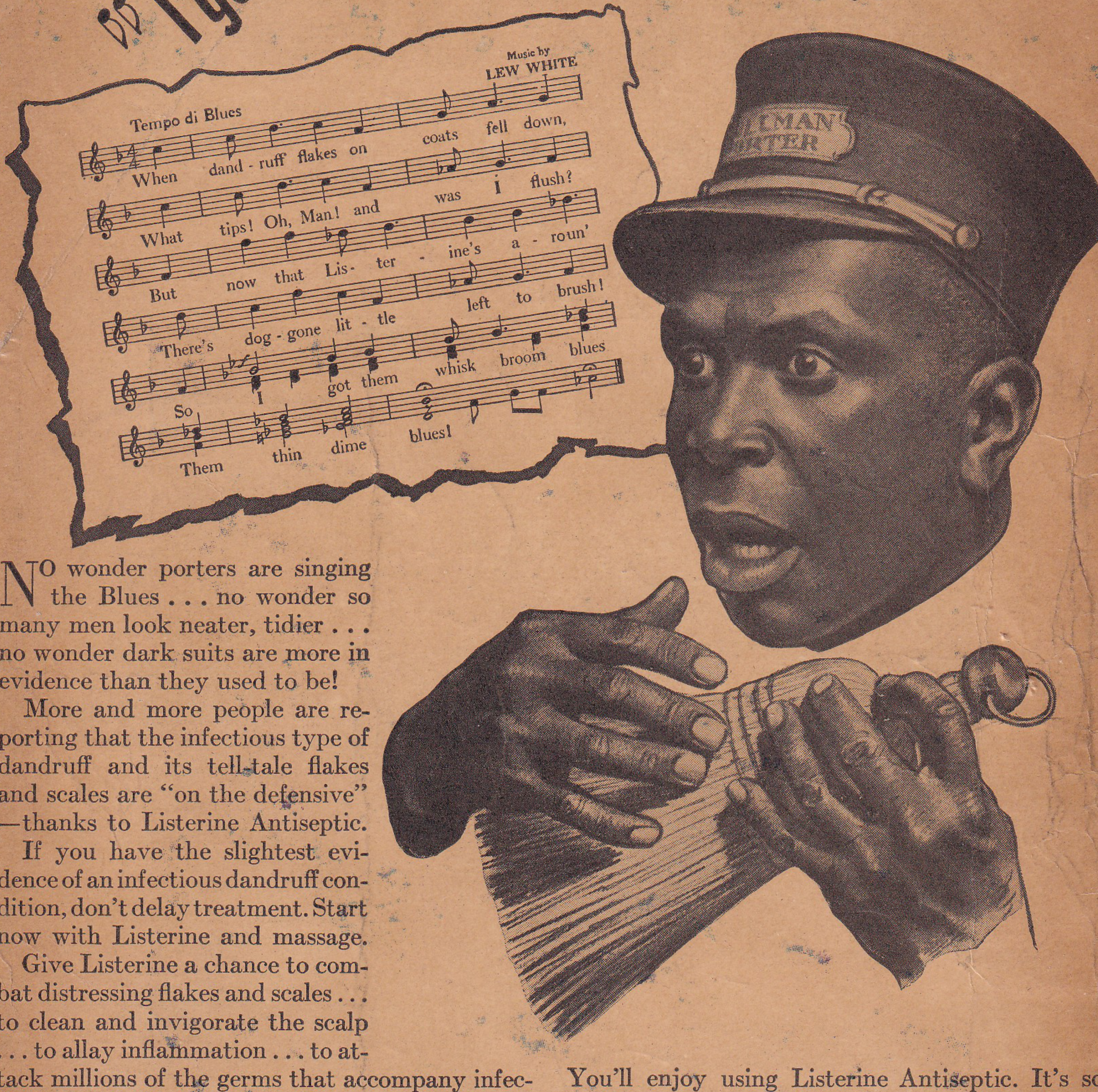
● A Booklength

CASH GORMAN NOVEL

10 CENTS

JUNE • 1941

"I got them whisk-broom blues ..."


Music by
LEW WHITE
Tempo di Blues
When dand-ruff flakes on coats fell down,
What tips! Oh, Man! and was I flush?
But now that Lis-ter-ine's a-roun'
There's dog-gone lit-tle left to brush!
So I got them whisk broom blues
Them thin dime blues!
PULLMAN PORTER

NO wonder porters are singing the Blues . . . no wonder so many men look neater, tidier . . . no wonder dark suits are more in evidence than they used to be!

More and more people are reporting that the infectious type of dandruff and its tell-tale flakes and scales are "on the defensive"—thanks to Listerine Antiseptic.

If you have the slightest evidence of an infectious dandruff condition, don't delay treatment. Start now with Listerine and massage.

Give Listerine a chance to combat distressing flakes and scales . . . to clean and invigorate the scalp . . . to allay inflammation . . . to attack millions of the germs that accompany infectious dandruff, including Pityrosporum Ovale, the strange "bottle bacillus" that leading authorities look upon as a real trouble-maker.

76% Improved in Clinical Test

The amazing 4-way action of this wonderful antiseptic explains, we believe, why 76% of the dandruff sufferers in one clinic who used Listerine and massage twice a day obtained either marked improvement in, or complete disappearance of, the symptoms of dandruff within 30 days.

You'll enjoy using Listerine Antiseptic. It's so cooling . . . so refreshing . . . so stimulating!

The treatment is easy and delightful!

MEN: Douse full-strength Listerine on the scalp morning and night. **WOMEN:** Part the hair at various places, and apply Listerine right along the part with a medicine dropper, to avoid wetting the hair excessively.

Always follow with vigorous and persistent massage with fingers or a good hairbrush. Continue the treatment so long as dandruff is in evidence. And even though you're free from dandruff, enjoy a Listerine massage once a week to guard against infection. Listerine Antiseptic is the same antiseptic that has been famous for more than 50 years as a mouth wash and gargle.

LAMBERT PHARMACAL CO., *St. Louis, Mo.*

LISTERINE for Infectious Dandruff

HEAD-HUNTERS!

- The "wild man from Borneo" and *your boss* have one thing in common! Both are "head-hunters"!

- Whether you work in an office or shop, your boss is constantly on the lookout for the man with a *trained head* on his shoulders! That's the man the boss selects for promotion! For, if you've mastered your *present* job, he knows you can master a *bigger* one! It's what you have in your *head* that counts—and don't forget it!

- This coupon, *mailed today*, will bring you full information on the International Correspondence Schools . . . whose graduates include the founder of a great automobile company, the president of a famous airline, the president of a vast mining corporation, and thousands of other successful men. A 3c stamp may be the best investment you ever made!

CG—1

1891 ★ 1941

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

Box 4907-L, Scranton, Penna.

Without cost to me, please send full particulars about the course marked X:

TECHNICAL AND INDUSTRIAL COURSES

☐ Agriculture
☐ Air Brake
☐ Air Conditioning
☐ Architectural Drafting
☐ Architecture
☐ Auto Engine Tune-up
☐ Auto Technician
☐ Aviation
☐ Boilermaking
☐ Bridge Engineering
☐ Building Estimating
☐ Chemistry
☐ Civil Engineering
☐ Coal Mining
☐ Concrete Engineering
☐ Contracting and Building
☐ Cotton Manufacturing
☐ Diesel Engines
☐ Electrical Engineering
☐ Electric Lighting
☐ Fire Bosses
☐ Foundry Work
☐ Fruit Growing
☐ Heating
☐ Heat Treatment of Metals
☐ Highway Engineering
☐ House Planning
☐ Locomotive Engineer
☐ Machinist
☐ Mgt. of Inventions
☐ Managing Men at Work
☐ Mfg. of Pulp and Paper
☐ Marine Engines
☐ Mechanical Drafting
☐ Mech. Engineering
☐ Mine Foreman
☐ Navigation
☐ Patternmaking
☐ Pharmacy
☐ Plumbing
☐ Poultry Farming
☐ Practical Telephony
☐ Public Works Engineering
☐ Radio, General
☐ Radio Operating
☐ Radio Servicing
☐ R. R. Sec. Foreman
☐ R. R. Signalmen's
☐ Refrigeration
☐ Sanitary Engineering
☐ Sheet Metal Work
☐ Steam Electric
☐ Steam Engines
☐ Steam Fitting
☐ Structural Drafting
☐ Structural Engineering
☐ Surveying & Mapping
☐ Telegraph Engineering
☐ Textile Designing
☐ Toolmaking
☐ Welding, Electric and Gas
☐ Woolen Manu'turing

BUSINESS COURSES

☐ Accounting
☐ Advertising
☐ Bookkeeping
☐ Bus. Correspondence
☐ Business Management
☐ Cartooning
☐ Civil Service
☐ College Preparatory
☐ Commercial
☐ Cost Accounting
☐ C. P. Accounting
☐ First Year College
☐ Foremanship
☐ French
☐ Grade School
☐ High School
☐ Illustrating
☐ Lettering Show Cards
☐ Railway Postal Clerk
☐ Salesmanship
☐ Secretarial
☐ Service Station Salesmanship
☐ Sign Lettering
☐ Spanish
☐ Traffic Management

HOME ECONOMICS COURSES

☐ Advanced Dressmaking
☐ Foods and Cookery
☐ Home Dressmaking
☐ Prof. Dressmaking and Designing
☐ Tea Room and Cafeteria Mgt., Catering

Name..*Age*..........

Address..

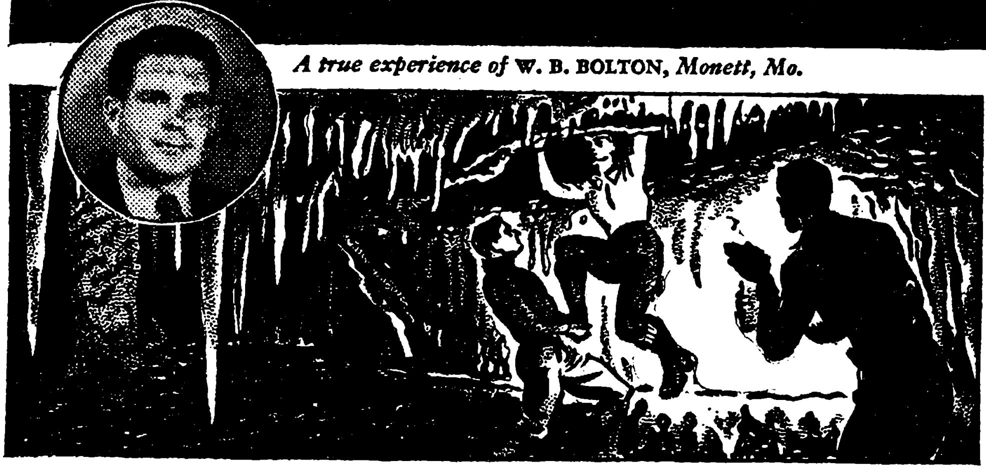
City..*State*....................

Present Position ....

Canadian residents send coupon to the International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Limited, Montreal, Canada. British residents send coupon to I. C. S., 71 Kingsway, London, W. C. 2, England.

"WE WERE ENTOMBED IN A MOUNTAIN LABYRINTH!"

A true experience of W. B. BOLTON, *Monett, Mo.*



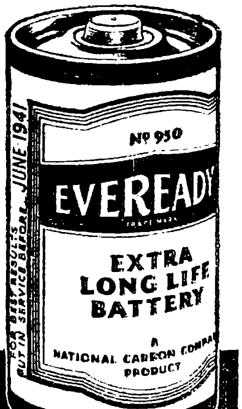
"A MYSTERIOUS 'MANHOLE' in the roof of an Ozark mountain cavern we were exploring one day intrigued us," writes Mr. Bolton. "With no sense of danger, we wriggled through the hole and into the inky darkness of a cave beyond. For hours, we explored.

"THEN TO OUR HORROR, we found that we were *lost!* Visions of searching parties finding our bones, months afterward, flashed in my mind as we searched for the exit. The candles flickered out as the hours passed. Only the flashlight was left.

"AFTER SEVEN HOURS and a half of hideous searching, we came upon the exit to safety. We had found our way back to life again, thanks to our flashlight and its dependable 'Eveready' *fresh* DATED batteries!"

(*Signed*) W. B. Bolton

The word "Eveready" is a registered trade-mark of National Carbon Company, Inc.


No 950
EVEREADY
EXTRA LONG LIFE BATTERY
A NATIONAL CARBON COMPANY PRODUCT
JUNE 1941
FOR BEST RESULTS PUT IN SERVICE BEFORE

FRESH BATTERIES LAST LONGER... *Look for the* **DATE-LINE**

NATIONAL CARBON COMPANY, INC., 30 EAST 42nd STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y.
Unit of Union Carbide UCC *and Carbon Corporation*

CASH GORMAN

CONTENTS JUNE, 1941 VOL. 1 NO. 5

The editorial contents of this magazine have not been published before, are protected by copyright and cannot be reprinted without the publisher's permission.

BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL

SABOTAGE . . . . Phil R. Sheridan . . . 9

Cash Gorman, financial adventurer, and his buddy, Jimmy Ranger, are ready to hop a plane for South America to inspect their investments there when events take a startling turn in New York City. The man nobody knows visits Cash and is then mysteriously murdered. The F. B. I. steps in and Cash is apprehended. Phineas Gardiner, the wolf of Wall Street, slips into the scene and suddenly Cash and Jimmy find themselves running an axle-manufacturing plant in the Midwest, with a band of evident international saboteurs ready to commit wholesale murder to stop production.

SHORT STORIES

TRACKS NEAR PEAKED HILL . . . Stanley Vickers . . . 80

Exciting hoofprints mark the forest mud and Tan figures to do some trading with Fletch, the guide.

MOTH MURDERER . . . . Don MacLauchlan . . 90

Handy Jacks prepares to do battle with the winged destroyers and an old enemy of past swindles.

WHITE ELEPHANT MANOR . . . . . Ross Russell 100

Weird ghosts walk the corridors and cymbals clash in unearthly harmony at the undertakers' convention.

DEPARTMENT

RECHRISTENED 6

COVER BY HUBERT ROGERS

NEXT ISSUE
ON SALE
WEDNESDAY
MAY 28th
10c per COPY

All stories in this magazine are fiction. No actual persons are designated either by name or character. Any similarity is coincidental.

Bimonthly publication issued by Street & Smith Publications, Incorporated, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York City. Allen L. Grammer, President; Henry W. Ralston, Vice President; Gerald H. Smith, Treasurer and Secretary. Copyright, 1941, in U. S. A. and Great Britain by Street & Smith Publications, Inc. We cannot accept responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts or artwork. Any material submitted must include return postage.

Printed in the U. S. A.

STREET & SMITH PUBLICATIONS, INC. • 79 7th AVE., NEW YORK

RE-CHRISTENED

• Cash assumes new importance. Shifting scenery.

THOMAS JEFFERSON GORMAN, called Cash by his associates because of a natural affinity with the long green medium of exchange, is evidently a likeable guy. At least he seems to be appreciated with his reading public. Perhaps it's partly because Cash meets such interesting, if not lovable, people in his flittings about the industrial world. At any rate, letters have been pouring in expressing admiration for Cash's methods of operation.

Readers like the fact that although Cash sticks his neck way out, and consequently, often gets it stepped on, he doesn't wriggle out of his tight squeezes with a ray gun—or any other kind of a gun. He runs into folks that use them but Cash, himself, is too smooth an operator for such crude tactics. He relies on his wit, a glib tongue and a studied calmness; and he has been very successful with such attributes. He has traveled far and now he has attained a new distinction; which brings us to the subject which this editorial was supposed to announce sooner.

Undoubtedly, most of you are already aware of the fact that the title of our magazine has been changed from The Wizard to Cash Gorman. If not, let this bear testimony to the fact. Now that Cash has made a name for himself he is herewith promoted by the management. He's not only part of a magazine now, he's the magazine.

So, unless Cash gets drafted or doesn't worm his way out of one of those close calls, your continued patronage will be rewarded by further episodes of the same exciting brand as the one which begins on page 9 of this issue.

• • •

The short story bill of fare this time is varied and we think you'll find it tasty. The scenes shift all the way from the northern stretches of the Adirondack Mountains to Florida, with some metropolitan flavor added.

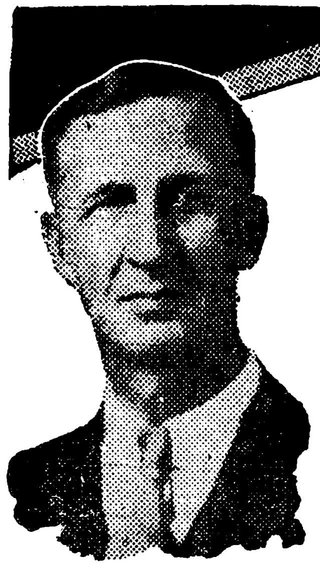
"Tracks Near Peaked Hill," the saga of a small boy's maneuvering toward a trade with a grizzly guide, takes you up into the mountains. You can start the interesting trail on page 80.

"Moth Murderer," concerns a swindle-minded gentleman by the name of Handy Jacks who operates out of New York, when he is fortunate enough to be operating. Things look black for Handy on page 90, but the lack of simple commodities like food always seem to sharpen such people's wits.

"White Elephant Manor," is the trip which takes you down to Florida. Undertakers, an abandoned hotel and a power and light company all contrive to make life miserable for a man with an idea. It begins on page 100.

• • •

When you ask for trouble you're bound to find it. Martin Rossi has his bank in difficulties because of his own hasty decision, the one such he made in his entire life. Cash is not properly sympathetic until he smells trouble. It all comes with a full-length novel in "Murder In Santa Paula" in August Gash Gorman on sale May 28.



J. E. Smith
President
National Radio Institute
Established 25 years

I WILL SEND A SAMPLE LESSON FREE

to PROVE I can Train You at Home in Spare Time for

GOOD RADIO JOBS

I Trained These Men

Chief Operator Broadcasting Station

Before I completed your lessons, I obtained my Radio Broadcast Operator's license and immediately joined Station WMPC where I am now Chief Operator. HOLLIS F. HAYES, 327 Madison St., Lapeer, Michigan.

Makes $50 to $60 a Week

I am making between $50 to $60 a week after all expenses are paid, and I am getting all the Radio work I can take care of, thanks to N. R. I. H. W. SPANGLER, 126½ S. Gay St., Knoxville, Tenn.

$10 to $25 a Week In Spare Time

I am now making from $10 to $25 a week in spare time while still holding my regular job as a machinist. I owe my success to N. R. I. WM. F. RUPP, 611 Green Street, Bridgeport, Pa.

DRAFT REGISTRANTS !

If you **ARE** called, and are then a Radio Technician, you'll be eligible for a communications branch of the service; in line for technical ratings with extra pay. If you **ARE NOT** called, you now have an opportunity to get into Radio at a time when the Government is pouring millions of dollars into the Radio industry to buy Defense equipment, on top of boom civilian Radio business. Either way—it's smart to train for Radio now.

Get my sample lesson Free. Examine it, read it—see how clear it is, how easy to understand. Find out how I train you at home in spare time to be a Radio Technician. Do it now. Mail the coupon.

Many Radio Technicians Make $30, $40, $50 a Week

Radio Broadcasting stations employ operators, technicians. Radio manufacturers employ testers, inspectors, servicemen in good-pay jobs. Radio jobbers and dealers employ installation and servicemen. Many Radio Technicians open their own Radio sales and repair businesses and make $30, $40, $50 a week. Others hold their regular jobs and make $5 to $10 a week fixing Radios in spare time. Automobile, Police, Aviation, Commercial Radio; Loudspeaker systems, Electronic Devices are other fields offering opportunities for which N. R. I. gives the required knowledge of Radio. Television promises to open good jobs soon.

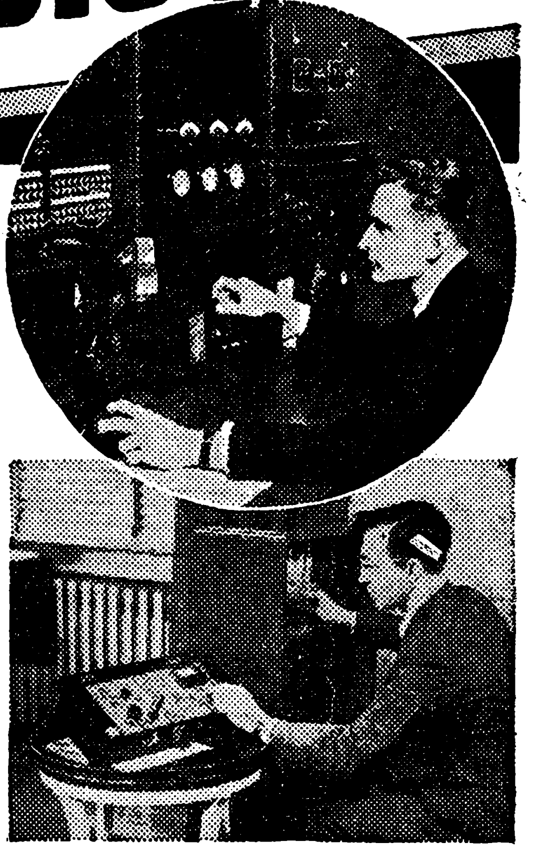
Many Make $5 to $10 a Week Extra in Spare Time While Learning

The day you enroll I start sending Extra Money Job Sheets; start showing you how to do Radio repair jobs. Throughout your Course, I send plans and directions that have helped many make $5 to $10 a week in spare time while learning. I send you special Radio equipment to conduct experiments and build circuits. This 50-50 method of training makes learning at home interesting, fascinating, practical. YOU ALSO GET A MODERN, PROFESSIONAL ALL-WAVE, ALL-PURPOSE SET SERVICING INSTRUMENT to help you make money fixing Radios while learning, and equip you for full time work after you become a Radio Technician.

Find Out What Radio, Television Offer You

Act Today. Mail the coupon now for sample lesson and 64-page book. They point out Radio's spare time and full time opportunities and those coming in Television; tell about my training in Radio and Television; show more than 100 letters from men I trained, telling what they are doing and earning. Find out what Radio, Television offer YOU! MAIL COUPON in an envelope, or paste on a postcard—NOW!

J. E. Smith, President
Dept. 1CD, National Radio Institute
Washington, D. C.



BROADCASTING STATIONS (top illustration) employ Radio Technicians as operators, installation, maintenance men and in other fascinating, steady, well-paying technical jobs.
FIXING RADIO SETS (lower illustration) pays many Radio Technicians $30, $40, $50 a week. Others hold their regular jobs and make $5 to $10 extra a week in spare time.

Mail Coupon Now!

RICH REWARDS IN RADIO

This FREE BOOK has Helped Hundreds of Men to Make More Money

Mr. J. E. Smith, President, Dept. 1CD,
NATIONAL RADIO INSTITUTE, Washington, D. C.

Mail me FREE, without obligation, your Sample Lesson and 64-page book, "Rich Rewards in Radio." (No Salesman will call. Please write plainly.)

Name.. Age........
Address ....
City................................ State..................2Fr-3

THE SHADOW'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY

● There are approximately four hundred million people in the Western Hemisphere. During 1940 almost twice that number

LISTENED TO....THE SHADOW!....over the radio
READ ABOUT....THE SHADOW!....in magazines and newspapers
SAW ....THE SHADOW!....on the motion-picture screen

And this audience is growing constantly!

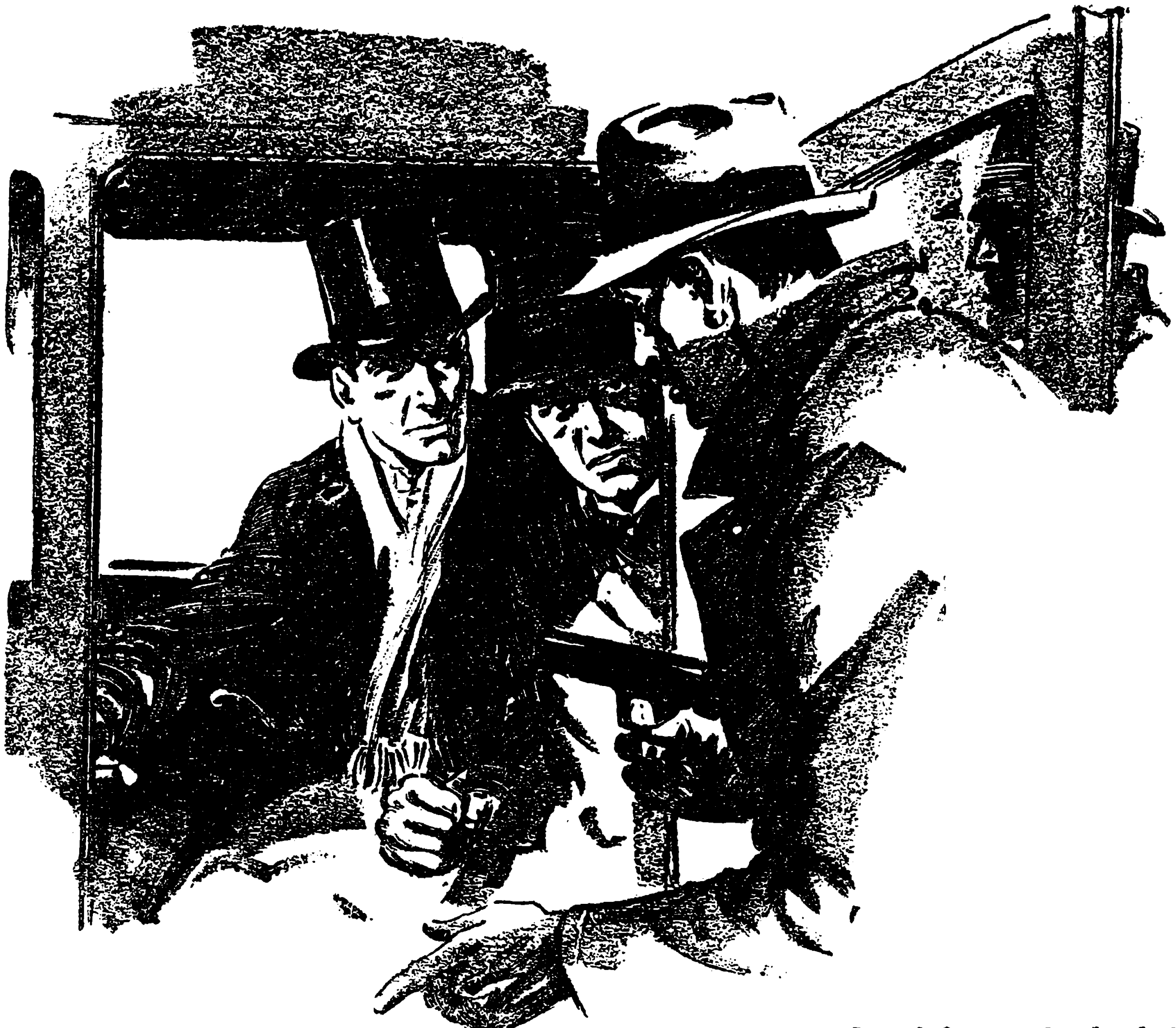
Almost a million words—960,000, to be exact—were written by Maxwell Grant for stories about THE SHADOW published during 1940. This is a greater volume of writing than has been done on any one fictional character in the world. THE SHADOW radio program has the highest half-hour-show popularity rating on record. His movie serials are all-time best-sellers. THE SHADOW newspaper strip is appearing in an ever-increasing number of daily newspapers, and SHADOW COMICS is rapidly becoming America's favorite comic magazine. THE SHADOW'S motto, "Crime Does Not Pay," has become a national slogan. His weird laugh is known all over the earth.

This is THE SHADOW'S tenth anniversary. A decade of death to crime is its own indication of his tremendous popularity.

The greatest mystery character of all time is . . .

The SHADOW!

Read **THE SHADOW'S GREATEST ADVENTURE IN THE CURRENT ISSUE**



SABOTAGE

● Straining steel let loose, twists and shatters National Defense Orders. The FBI rushes in to keep production lines humming and finds itself allied with Cash Gorman, the wizard of odds.

BY PHIL R. SHERIDAN

CHAPTER I.

TRYING TO CATCH A PLANE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON GORMAN burst into the suite at the Hotel Vandermore which he was sharing with his associate, Jimmy Ranger, and flung his overcoat on the bed. The haste was an unaccustomed pose and caused Jimmy to leap to his feet.

"Is the joint pinched, or . . . no, no, don't say it!" said Jimmy.

"Get the airport on the wire. Reserve two seats on the first clipper for La Paz," said Cash.

"No," said Jimmy, "not this time. You go alone. What in the name of common sense do you expect to find out about those dwarf rubber trees? You're stuck! Stuck for one hundred and fourteen thousand dollars and it'll be ten years before they grow to a size to produce. I've seen you lose that much dough over a roulette table without batting an eye. Why all this sudden concern? Especially after telling me I could see some shows and enjoy myself?"

"Well," said Cash, "make it one seat on the clipper. And if I have to get used to being alone, I might as well do it in the sun. Get me a ship to Miami as fast as you can."

Jimmy picked up the phone and asked for the transportation desk. He talked at length into it and then turned to Cash and said: "Can we?"

"Can we what?"

"Can we make LaGuardia Field in fifty minutes? There's room in a Miami flight leaving in fifty minutes."

"Tell 'em to hold it, we'll be there with time to spare for coffee. They wouldn't understand a man drinking buttermilk before a flight."

Jimmy repeated the message into the phone and then began to hustle around the room, tossing various items of clothing and toilet articles into a heap on the bed. During one of his excursions around the suite, meanwhile blasting at Cash for his foolhardy venture, he called downstairs for bellboys to be at the room in ten minutes.

"Listen, all kidding to one side," said Jimmy. "You can fool lots of people, Cash, but you can't fool Jimmy. Why are we going to South America?"

"Until a moment ago, Jimmy, I didn't know," replied Cash. "First I thought it was to get away from you. But since you have moved in on the journey, it must be to get away from Phineas T. Gardiner."

Jimmy Ranger stopped short. He looked at Cash as if he'd been hit over the head with an idea.

"Well," he said, "that's the first sensible thing I've ever known you to do. The farther I can get away from that sheep with the heart of a financial cobra, the better I will enjoy life."

"James," said Cash, "you shouldn't malign our sometimes benefactor."

"Benefactor?" screamed Jimmy. "What a benefactor, especially that milk-company deal he wished on you! It was a swell chance to turn a profit, really swell—if you didn't get your head blown off before you reached for the dough!"

"Many a man has been shot reaching for the pot before he showed his hand, James," said Cash, "but this time, dear old Phineas T. and Thomas Jefferson Gorman had best be separated by an ocean. And since it is very unpleasant in Europe at the moment, South America will have to do as a substitute. The rubber experiment is an excuse, James, not a reason."

"I catch on slow," said Jimmy, ruefully. "Old P. T. was really trying to stick your fingers into the chopper again. I don't think the old pinch penny will be happy until he's really clipped you—but proper! He'll never forgive you for that helium deal."

"Or the fact that he saved Taimiami for racing and polite high-pressure blackmail of a sort with precious little profit to him," said Cash, "but this time he's really getting me."

"What's the deal this time?" asked Ranger.

The telephone rang and Jimmy picked up the instrument to answer.

"He's trying to get me to take over an all-but-defunct branch of an axle company, or something like that that he's stuck with," replied Cash, "and we're not seeing anybody, especially we are not seeing Mr. Gardiner!"

"Who?" said Jimmy into the phone. "Who is he? I don't know him." He waited and then said: "No, this is not Mr. Gorman. This is Mr. Ranger. I'm associated with Mr. Gorman; what can I do for you?" He waited, listening. "Never heard of it; no, I don't think so, we have only fifty minutes to catch a plane from LaGuardia Field, and you'll have to admit that's short time."

"Who is it? What does he want?" Cash asked.

Jimmy held his hand over the mouthpiece: "Some guy from Columbia. Says something about a factory or something. I thought that was a college, or a broadcasting company."

Cash stopped short in his packing. He grabbed the phone from Jimmy. "This is Mr. Gorman," he said; "what is it you want?" He covered the mouthpiece with his hand and said: "You'll never get rich telling people you don't know your business, my thick-headed friend. Get those bags closed." Then, into the phone, he continued, "I believe I have made myself clear on this question.

"Oh," he said, "you came from Columbia to see me?"

Cash listened. "All right; come up. But you'll have to make it short." He put down the phone and started to close the bags.

"What's the idea?" Jimmy asked.

"That guy is either a liar, or Phineas is getting smart, and I'm curious enough to find out which," replied Cash.

"Weren't you the guy who was going to South America to get away from Mr. Gardiner?"

"And I still am," replied Cash, "but if the guy should happen to be telling the truth and is from Columbia, what I want to know is, how did he connect me with the Columbia Heavy Axle Corp.? I never heard about it until two hours ago."

"And I have never heard about it," said Jimmy, "and if it is all the same, I'll die happy never discovering it, if Phineas T. Gardiner is in the plot."

"He is, and his challenge to my business acumen nearly got you into the middle of the Columbia company, James; but my own sober judgment got the better of my hot, free-style temper, and I let Phineas have his way. And, so we are going to Brazil and Phineas is stuck with a gold brick—a very heavy one, because I understand the axle has something to do with basic industries of the motor-car business. I'm for lighter things, bouncing balls and such stuff as can be made from those rubber trees I hope are again flourishing in Brazil."

"Transplanted, you might add," said Jimmy, "at the expense of Thomas Jefferson Gorman from the Maylay Peninsula."

"James," said Cash, "that was only a small contribution toward reviving the rubber output of South America. If it comes to anything, it will be like a five-thousand-to-one shot riding home."

"At those odds, your ticket should really pay off," said Ranger, referring as he always did to the better than one hundred thousand dollars Cash had been touched for in his ill-fated South American venture. "But anything is better to me than to get involved with another Gardiner enterprise; and I'm even willing to get away from New York, if it will wean you of the habit of sticking your financial neck under his coupon-cutting shears. He'll tear the hide from you yet!"

THE buzzer sounded and Jimmy swung open the door. A thin man, immaculately dressed in a dark Chesterfield overcoat, with a derby in his hand, stood in the doorway. His somber clothes gave his bloodless face a frightening, chalky aspect. "I'm Peter Coyne. Mr. Gorman?"

Jimmy extended his hand. "No, but come in," he said. "I'm Ranger. This is Mr. Gorman."

Cash stepped over and took the man's outstretched hand. In a glance he took in the attire of his caller and he thought: "Wall Street." He was convinced his caller had come directly from Gardiner's office.

"I know you are in a hurry," said Coyne, "so I'll come to the point. I'm interested in Columbia Heavy Axle; that is, my people are. I'll pay you a seven-dollar premium for the stock you control."

"Whom are you with, Mr. Coyne?" asked Cash. He toyed with the idea of frisking Phineas T. Gardiner out of seventy thousand dollars right under his nose, and then assumed a dead-pan expression to hide another thought; one which placed Phineas T. in the role of a ribber, fixing him by one of the oldest gags of the confidence man: creating a market for unmarketable securities, a market which vanishes once you've laid your money on the counter for the coveted control. Cash was amused, but basically he felt Gardiner wouldn't resort to such lengths to shear him.

"I am unable to tell you whom I represent," the stranger continued, "though the Columbia Manufacturer's Bank will assure you, if you phone them, that I'm empowered to make the offer, and my bank and the SEC here will vouch for me, as will your friend, Mr. Gardiner."

"Why don't you do business with Phineas first hand?" asked Cash.

"Mr. Gardiner is unapproachable. His premium is out of question," said Coyne steadily. Cash was on the verge of telephoning Gardiner when Coyne arose. "That's my offer, Mr. Gorman," he said. "If you decide to take it, you can get me at this number." He dropped a card on the table, "but if you do not, I warn you there will be no further offer." He shook hands and walked to the door and passed out into the hall.

Cash turned to Jimmy and said: "We're either being duped or there's something afoot. Try to get Gardiner." He went about packing. Presently, Gardiner was on the other end of the wire.

"Listen, you old skinflint," Cash began, "since when do you think I'm so gullible as to fall for that set-up?"

"What set-up?" asked Gardiner, impatience ringing in his voice. "Don't talk in symbols, there's a gentleman in my office asking me questions and I don't like him any better than I like you, which makes too many disagreeable people at one time for me; so what's on your mind? If any?"

"That Coyne guy," said Cash. "What are you trying to pull?"

"Was Pete Coyne up to see you? Trying to buy your share in Columbia Axle?"

"Now, aren't you playing cute?" said Cash. "Come out from behind the whiskers; I know you! Trying to give me the old switch game. Do you think I was born yesterday? Hello. Hello!" Cash jiggled the hook. "Must have been cut off. Operator. I was speaking with Hannibal 0023. Get it back. Hello, Mr. Gardiner. This is Mr. Gorman, I was cut off." Cash waited a moment and then said: "Yes, Gorman. Oh!" He hung up.

"Get those bags," he said. "Get a boy up here. At the elevator. We're getting out of here."

He rushed into his overcoat as Jimmy ordered the bellboy. In less than five minutes, Cash was at the cashier's cage paying his hotel bill and telling Jimmy to put the bags in a cab.

"Get a fast one," he said. "One with a radio so I won't be bothered with my thoughts."

When Cash reached the front of the hotel, Jimmy was seated in a huge taxi, a radio blasting a popular tune. Cash jumped in and slammed the door: "To the airport," he yelled at the driver.

"May I ask why we are running away from this hotel?" asked Jimmy. "Is it on fire?"

"James, my boy," said Cash, "Mr. Gardiner's secretary should really be fired. He told me his boss was rushing up to my hotel to meet me with another man. There is something very smelly about this; and it smells of fish, which I dislike intensely."

"You mean the fish got off the hook and Phineas didn't believe it?" asked Jimmy.

"Exactly, James; I'm not giving him another chance to land this fish, either." Cash sank back into the deep seat and enjoyed the music.

CHAPTER II.

THE MAN NO ONE KNOWS IS MURDERED.

THE taxi eased softly through traffic to Park Avenue and turned northward. At Fifty-sixth Street, the driver headed east toward Lexington Avenue, where he was confronted with a red traffic light. A large car stopped next to Cash's taxi and from it and into Gorman's cab jumped a tall and efficient-appearing man.

"Oh," said Cash, "company! And in broad daylight."

The radio was going, so the driver could not hear the noise in the back seat.

"This is no hold-up," said the intruder. "I'm just here to do my job."

"I trust murder is not one of your specialties," said Cash.

"I'm from the FBI. The boss wants you back at that hotel you just hotfooted out of," he said. "Why, I don't know! But I think you better tell the driver to turn back or those fellows in that car will become concerned for my health."

Cash looked to the car from which his visitor had stepped and he saw several very eager-looking gentlemen who looked as if they were possessed of the same sort of unshakable determination as his own guard.

"Driver," he called, "apparently, I forgot to pay my hotel bill. This gentleman requests my presence there. Will you turn back?"

The driver turned around, startled to find he had three where a moment ago he had only two passengers. The message for the altered destination didn't seem to disturb him at all. The FBI man smiled weakly. The cab turned down Lexington Avenue and back toward the hotel.

"There, James," said Cash, "is a lesson in minding your own business. That driver is not concerned at all with me trying to beat a hotel bill; he's mad that I didn't get away with it, and thus lost him a stout fare. He shall be rewarded."

When the cab drew up to the hotel, Cash directed the driver to park and let the meter ride.

The trio swung into the hotel, with one of the FBI men out of the escort car stepping into the revolving door ahead of Cash and another behind him. He walked between them up the steps. In the lobby, filled with tea-time guests, Cash said in a loud voice:

"One side, folks, this man is a dangerous criminal; he is under arrest." He grabbed his first visitor under the arm and walked him toward the desk. The lobby standers fell away from them like small boys rushing away from a bonfire suddenly out of control.

"Very funny," said the FBI man, who was nearly a half foot taller than Cash's near six-foot frame. "Have you ever been introduced to a good punch in the face?"

"Not recently," said Cash, "and that's against the rules, on duty. In public, at least."

"Sometimes I get off duty," said the big fellow, "and I get around. I'll introduce you some day to a couple of friends of mine."

Cash smiled, not too enthusiastically. His smile froze on his face when he was ushered from the desk up a flight of stairs to a balcony and into an office marked "Manager," whereupon he saw Phineas T. Gardiner talking to two other men.

"A fine thing," exclaimed Cash, "the G-men working hand in glove with a swindler like you. Do you realize, Phineas, I have missed a plane to Florida and that I have lost a clipper reservation to South America?".

"I am very sorry, Mr. Gorman," said one of the other men in the office. "I am Walker of the local FBI office. I am responsible for bringing you back."

"You! How did you know I'd gone?" asked Cash, shaking hands with the man.

"I told him you'd be gone," said Gardiner. "If he wanted you, I told him to have his men grab you because you thought I was trying to swindle you and, therefore, you'd probably be on your way to Asia—never thought of South America—by the time we got up town."

"Phineas," said Cash, "sometimes I believe you do pick up things quickly. You'd have never thought of anything as clever as that before you knew me. Oh, well, we've missed the plane now; what are the charges against me?"

"Cash," asked Gardiner, concern on his face, "did Pete Coyne really make you an offer for Columbia stock?"

Cash smiled blandly at Gardiner. "Are these fellows stooges, too?"

"Mr. Gorman, if you will bear with me," said Walker, "this is very serious business. Mr. Coyne, apparently, was empowered by somebody to buy up stock in the Columbia company. We need to know who. Did he say?"

"I'm sorry," said Cash, now deadly serious. "I thought my friend, Mr. Gardiner, was trying to set me up for a fast one; and I didn't take Mr. Coyne seriously. Definitely, he did not mention anybody. In fact, he said he was not in a position to reveal the identity of his people."

"But he did offer you a price?"

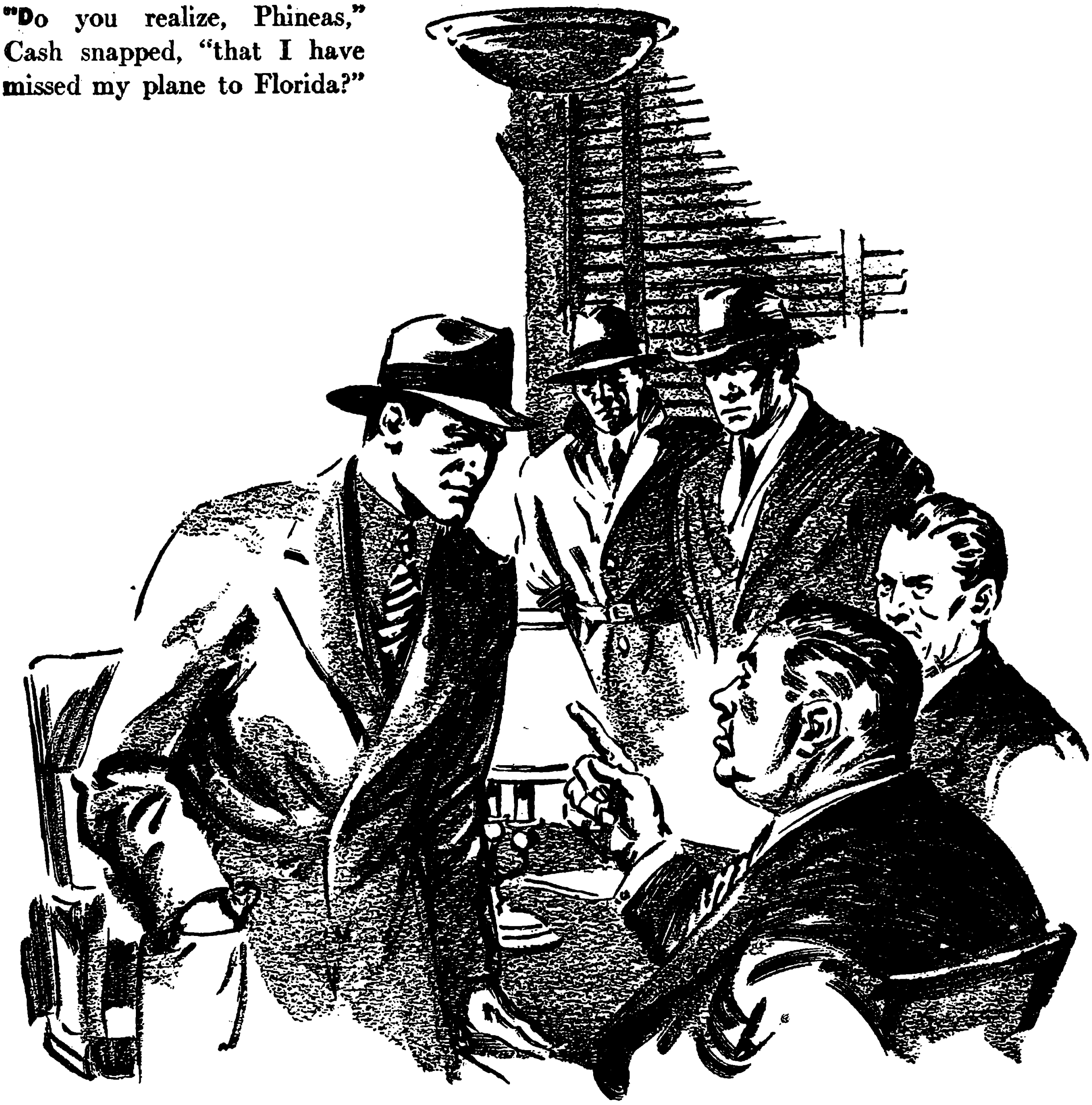
"Yes, he did," said Cash, "and that's why I thought Gardiner was setting me up."

"Why?" asked the G-man.

"The price was all out of sympathy with the financial statement Gardiner had shown me a few hours before," said Cash. "He offered me a seven-dollar premium."

Walker looked knowingly at Gardiner and hailed one of his men from outside the office. He rose and walked around the desk. He spoke in hushed tones to the man, who left, and then re-

"Do you realize, Phineas," Cash snapped, "that I have missed my plane to Florida?"



sumed his seat. Jimmy Ranger spoke for the first time: "We'll have a mortgage on that cab. Shouldn't I pay him off?"

"No," said Cash, "we may still need him."

He turned to Gardiner. "Phineas," he said, "am I to be kept in the dark? Or are you going to tell me why I've been forced to miss a plane?"

"I offered you an opportunity to make some money and you got smart," said Gardiner. "Why should I tell you anything?"

"I'll sue the government," said Cash. "This sounds like a melodrama; and I've had my fill of that for the moment."

"We came to Mr. Gardiner this morning," said Walker, "because we have a great interest in what is going on in Columbia. We suspected that the axle company might give us a clue through its ownership, especially since we found that Mr. Gardiner was willing to sell part of his stock. We wanted to learn who would be interested in buying the stock."

"But he didn't offer the stock to me until today," said Cash. "And within three hours, a guy I've never heard of, comes and makes me an offer of a seven-dollar premium."

"The premium, as you say, is incompatible with the axle company's financial situation," said Walker. "Therefore, we are very much interested in Mr. Coyne's motives."

"And not how he happened to come to me?" asked Cash.

"No," said Walker, "that might be entirely coincidence. You have been associated with Mr. Gardiner before in financial deals and you've just come back to New York. It might be that Coyne reasoned Gardiner would offer his stock to a lot of his friends.

"What's the plot of this thing, anyway?" asked Jimmy.

"The plot is, Mr. Ranger," said Walker, surprising Jimmy by calling him by his name, "that we are fearful that there is a power, either foreign or local, that is interested in hindering the progress of Columbia Axle."

"Sabotage?" asked Jimmy.

"That, Mr. Ranger," said Walker evenly, "might be construed, at the moment, to be somewhat melodramatic." The telephone on the manager's desk rang and Walker picked it up and spoke into it. Presently, he put it down. "Mr. Ranger, you were not a second too soon with your estimate. Sabotage might be the word!"

The G-man looked grave and preoccupied for a moment. He called to a man outside the office. "Have the cars draw up to the door," he directed. "I'm sorry, gentlemen, I have detained you. I must get down to Coyne's office."

"Did you order him arrested?" asked Gardiner.

"Yes, but they beat me to it. Mr. Coyne had been murdered! We will find nothing from him. I'm sorry, Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Gorman. There doesn't seem to be much we can find out through a transfer of stock of the Columbia Axle at the moment. If there is, I hope I am free to call upon you. And I trust, Mr. Gorman," Walker added, "that you will see your way clear to remain in this hotel. We might have more questions to ask you later."

"Give the cabby a liberal tip, James," said Cash, "and see yourself some more shows."

Jimmy Ranger dashed out of the office in advance of the G-man, happy to be staying in New York, regardless of the cause.

"Phineas," said Cash, "I think you have served yourself a plentiful helping of hot potatoes."

"I offered some to you," said Gardiner," and you wouldn't take any. Honestly, Cash, I thought I was offering you something good. The company is a cinch to get some defense orders and I'm simply stuck with the stock on a bad debt. I don't want any more part of such carryings on; though I must say I'm glad that Coyne didn't get the stock to his principals, if it meant he would pass control of it to a power which would sacrifice a plant important to the defense program."

"Now, don't start appealing to my patriotism," said Cash, "when the only reason you are interested in me going to Columbia is to protect your own investment; and bad debt or not, it did cost you some dough. And you separate from money as easily as taking the Scotch back out of the soda after you've dumped it in."

"Don't you think I have any ethical turns of mind at all, Cash?" Gardiner asked. "Don't you believe I might be concerned with my country?"

"Perhaps now," said Cash, "but earlier today, you were mostly concerned with having me pay back half the money you loaned to somebody; money you never expected to get back. It's a very old swindle with you financial wizards. You back a lemon and when you begin to get all stunk up with the juice, you cut down the loss fifty, or even a hundred percent, if you can, by getting a few suckers in the same way you were hooked. That was your idea this morning, Phineas. We Gorman's don't fool easily."

"Have it your way," said Phineas. "Maybe you're right. But just the same, I would be very happy to have you look into it for me. But then, I don't know. This might require a different sort of acumen than you possess."

"Now, don't appeal to my Irish pride and panic me into this thing," said Cash. "It won't work. I want no part of Columbia, though I'm certain it must be a nice town."

Gardiner picked up his hat and shook hands with Cash.

"All right, Cash," he said. "If you should change your mind, call me."

"I won't," Cash replied. Gardiner left. Cash went to the desk and engaged the rooms from which he had but recently checked out. He was told that his "associate, Mr. Ranger," had already taken care of the matter and had gone up to the rooms. Cash went into the elevator and called his floor.

SEVERAL persons were in the car, so Cash was not surprised when others got off at the eleventh floor with him. It was, as always, his custom to get rooms on the seventh or eleventh floors. The others who alighted with him were a couple, obviously together, and a taller man, apparently their guest. They were laughing and talking in an indistinguishable, happy bedlam. They went through the same corridors that led to Cash's suite and were engaged in opening the door to the corner rooms inside the small hallway partitions which Cash's entrance shared with another suite when Cash reached the end of the corridor.

He stood back, waiting for them to open the door, when the taller man turned and said: "Oh, I beg your pardon." The other man fumbled with his pockets and stepped outside, to make room for Cash. "I must have forgotten my keys." He smiled. "Don't let me detain you."

He stepped aside to permit Cash to enter, which he did. He buzzed the buzzer and Jimmy opened the door. Then Cash was shoved from behind and with such force that he knocked Jimmy down. He lost his balance trying to resist gravity and make his charge against Jimmy less violent. He fell, too. Jimmy's head hit the edge of a footrest and he rolled unconscious to the floor.

"You are not hurt, Mr. Gorman," said a voice with which Cash was unpleasantly familiar. He instinctively knew, though he could not place the voice, that it was owned by a ruthless citizen. Names, places and dates hurtled through his mind as he feigned injury and shook his head as if to shake consciousness back into himelf. Then he knew. He jumped to his feet.

"So you escaped, eh, Steele," he said. "Well, let me tell you something. This time I'll have you deported for assault on a citizen of this country."

"Less talk," said Steele in a guttural tone which seemed more to fit him now than it ever had when Cash and Jimmy ran acropper to him in a helium-gas deal in Denver.

It was Cash's notion that he had left

Steele all wound up in a charge of first-degree murder, as well as a confession of guilt in a stock-swindle deal with George and Bobbie Ray, a poor misguided chorus girl who had been caught in the trap. A confederate, a White Russian girl of loose ethics, had been murdered in cold blood just as she had been about to sell out to Cash; and failing to pin the rap on Cash, through the co-operation of Jimmy Ranger, then hotel detective at the Golden Fleece Hotel, Cash had managed to save the money of lots of investors as well as to solve the murder of the Russian girl. Steele's involvement and conviction, then, did not add up to the presence of the man in a New York hotel pushing people around, with strong-arm men ready to help him. Cash got to his feet. To his utter amazement, he found that his old friend Steele was not present.

"I do not know what you are talking about," said the shorter of the two men he had passed in the corridor. Though he didn't look like Steele, he talked like him and he was of about the same build. "But the point is this, to come to it at once, Mr. Gorman: You have some Columbia Axle stock. Get it out and indorse it over to me. I have brought you money, with which you always deal, I understand, so that the transaction can be completed at once. Get the stock out and sign it."

"Gentlemen," Cash said, turning to the taller of the two men, who held a gun in his hand, "please cover up the heavy arms. We never carry artillery with us. Might cause embarrassment as I am very nervous."

"And my understanding is, very clever," said the shorter man. "No guff, sign the papers and we'll get out."

"You have me at a very sad disadvantage," said Gorman, "because it just happens I have no stock to sign over to you—or to anybody. I have no stock! And, since the gentlemen with whom I was just talking down in the manager's office, is coming back with other gentlemen to question me about the murder of a man named Coyne, I would suggest you leave here as peacefully as you walked down the hallway, and as happily."

"Who? Coyne? Peter Coyne? Murdered?" It was the woman who spoke. "Henry, let's get out of here!"

"Who would be coming here to see this man?" asked Henry, regaining his composure.

"Who but the police, the FBI, G-men, to you, my friend," said Cash. The telephone rang at that moment.

"Don't answer that," said the little man. "Go, Lotta. Go, Swenson. I'll be there immediately. Give me your key, Gorman." Cash picked the key off the table and tossed it to the man. The taller man and woman were already down the hall. The shorter man said: "Don't answer that phone until I'm away from this door, or I'll come back and shoot you dead before anybody can get to the floor." He darted out of the room and turned the lock in the door and Cash was locked in with the key outside. He was so happy to be alone that he dashed for the bathroom and cold water before he thought of the phone. The suggestion of the G-men was enough to make his visitors believe they were on the phone, but he knew better. While the insistent ringing went on, he iced Jimmy's head. Then he answered the ringing.

"This is the theater-ticket agency downstairs. We have two tickets for Mr. Ranger for 'The Man Who Came To Dinner.' Shall I send them up?"

"I think not," said Cash. "If the

man who came to dinner wants Mr. Ranger tonight, he'll have to come here. Send up some aspirin."

After a time, Jimmy's head cleared and he leaped out of bed.

"What the hell was that, the Chicago Bears' football team that came in with you?" he demanded.

Cash was busy trying to locate Phineas T. Gardiner on the telephone.

"No," he said, "that wasn't a football team, son. That was somebody I'm afraid our old friend, Herr Steele, would be glad to meet. Don't unpack the bags, my friend. We are leaving on a night plane for Detroit, where we shall sleep, but sparingly, and then we shall be driven to Columbia. For life will be all heavy axles and sabotage to you for the immediate future."

He listened into the phone.

"Yes, Shylock," he said, "it's me, Gorman. Yes; Cash. I'll fall for your theatricals. I'll tell you what. I'll take over the management of that dead duck at Columbia for sixty days and give you a dollar a share option to buy half your stuff. How much have you got?"

"I'll expect your check for ten thousand in the mail in the morning," replied Gardiner. "And I'll wire Holmes you'll be in when?"

"What," yelled Cash. "How much of that turkey is out?"

"Twenty-five thousand shares, and I have twenty. Holmes, the general manager, has the rest."

"Wire him to set two extra places for breakfast, we'll be there," said Cash. He hung up the phone. "James, make out a check to that swindler."

"For how much?"

"Ten thousand."

Jimmy opened a brief case and withdrew a check book. He looked into a stub and found a balance of nearly fifteen thousand five hundred dollars.

"Can you tell me what we use for money after this check is drawn?" Jimmy asked.

"With a heavy axle in each hand, you shouldn't have any trouble raising carfare back to Denver," said Cash.

CHAPTER III.

CASH INSPECTS COLUMBIA.

AFTER a breakfast at Detroit, which Cash ignored because he refused to gulp down his food, but which Jimmy relished in five minutes flat, they were winging their way to Columbia, thirty minutes by air from the Motor City. Cash snoozed and Jimmy, alert to the adventures of the moment, sought to converse with the co-pilot who paid him no heed. Eventually, he could stand the strain no longer:

"This flight is costing us one hundred and twenty-five dollars," he said to Cash, "and in Detroit, just now, you'd need a traffic cop to regulate those planes coming in and out. If you want to get a business which is nice and safe for the purse and full of adventure, why don't you take over a defunct airplane company? No, you have to get wound up in an axle factory for trucks; don't you know the auto is dead? Air freight is the thing of the future."

"Sing to yourself, James," said Cash. "I'm trying to justify my foolish whims of listening to Phineas T. Gardiner and my conscience. My better judgment tells me I'm a damn fool, and your seconding voice adds no pleasure to my present state of mind."

"So, I'm to sit back and watch you go flat broke in a turkey which the old skinflint wished on you?" Jimmy questioned. And then, without waiting for a reply, he went on: "It's not too late, Cash. Let's turn back. Maybe we can still catch the next clipper to South America."

"Perhaps you have a nest egg which you have been hoarding!" returned Cash. "If you haven't, maybe you can tell me what we'll impress our South American neighbors with. You haven't forgotten, have you, that our bank roll is sadly in the state of deplete at the moment?"

"Yeh," said Jimmy flatly, and slumped into his seat. Presently, the plane began circling a desolate-looking airport. "Save me the suspense," he said to the pilot. "Don't tell me that metropolis down there, with the smoke stacks belching a lot of nothing, is Columbia."

"Yeh," replied the pilot. "That's her."

"She's a her," commented Jimmy, peering over the window ledge of the airplane. "Nice, busy little place, or maybe they work at nights. Oh, there's activity over there."

He pointed for Cash to follow his direction. Save for smoke issuing from a tall stack at the other side of town, there seemed to be no factory activity in the town. As Jimmy had remarked, Columbia was a desolate-looking place. It was an industrial city; and in a morning sun, with factory after factory nothing more than piles of bricks on the earth below, Columbia did not present an inspiring sight to the air traveler. It looked like bottom of the barrel depression.

"I hope," said Cash, "that place over there is our little beehive."

"Has it got any business you know of?"

"Why, yes, it had," said Cash. "One of the first things our friend Phineas told me after we concluded our deal was that Holmes—that's the general manager—telephoned him some good news last night. They've been awarded a contract for two hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars from the Eagles Motor Co. It's a new contract.

"Well, maybe we are arriving with prosperity at last," returned Jimmy, "we've got to turn the corner sometime; but if you ask me, the block has been long as hell."

"Don't be a pessimist, James; you sound like a politician who lost his home district!"

The plane landed and came to a halt and Cash stepped out. Jimmy followed him. He gave the pilot a twenty-five-dollar tip for a speedy voyage and bade him good-by.

"Easy with the cabbage, Cash," said Jimmy. "You handle it as if you had plenty. You haven't, my friend; so peel the leaves off with care."

"James, look after the luggage and find yourself the hotel, if there is a first-class establishment passing for same in this thriving cemetery, and telephone me at the plant," Cash said. He was about to step into a taxicab when a roadster pulled up to the roadside of the hangar. A girl wearing a brown turban which gave her the appearance of an efficiency expert, set off as it was atop a wrap-around camel's-hair coat, pulled the car to a stop and jumped out of it almost before it lost momentum.

"Are you Mr. Gorman?" she asked. The tone of her voice did not dispel the aspect of efficiency. It enhanced it.

"Yes, I am," replied Cash. "And to whom am I speaking?" He extended his hand. The girl ignored it.

"I'm from Columbia Axle. Mr. Holmes asked me to pick you up at the airport. Sorry we couldn't send a company car, but we didn't know you were arriving until this morning."

She motioned him to take a seat. Cash was not accustomed to being ushered around, and his last experience with such a gesture had not been exactly pleasant. He hesitated.

"Once I followed such a command," he said politely, "and what I thought had been a gentleman proved to be a cur. He slammed me through a door and I landed on my nose. You are not planning to whack me on the head, are you?"

"I beg your pardon!" she said.

"My father once told me to beware of females in automobiles," he said smartly, "but I guess he'd never seen you. After you, my dear Miss—"

"Rockwell," she supplied. "Isabel Rockwell. I'm called Rocky at the plant."

He stopped Jimmy, who was negotiating with a taxi driver. Cash turned to Miss Rockwell and said: "Rocky, can you tell me a hotel which supplies hot water with its unsoiled linen, and daily?"

"We have a very fine hotel. The Columbia Arms," she replied. "But Mr. Holmes insisted I bring you and your baggage to the plant. He has something in mind."

"No doubt," said Cash, envisioning Holmes as a small-time business man anxious to impress his lavish Columbia suburban hospitality on him, and he mentally arranged his rebuttal to the invitation then and there. "Personally, I think I shall be happier," he said, "at the Columbia Arms. Rocky, this is James Ranger, my associate and constant nuisance."

"How do you do!" said the girl.

"How like Alaska!" said Jimmy. "What do you want me to do, Cash?"

"Wait till you hear from me," said Cash. "And tell them to steam up the hot water in that billet; I shall be there in less than an hour."

Jimmy backed away from the roadster and headed for the cab. Rocky slid the car into gear and swung out from behind the taxi. Cash flung a half-dollar tip at the other disappointed driver. The girl looked at him and then turned to the road.

"Are you always as foolish with your money?" she asked, rather in the form of a statement than as a question.

"Foolishness and spending money," said Cash, "I long ago learned, are all in the point of view. I always make a point of fulfilling some part of every contract I undertake. The man thought I was a fare. You cheated him, so I paid him for the time he spent thinking about the fare he had lost. Simple, isn't it?"

"Simply foolish," she said.

"May I ask your occupation with this thriving enterprise upon which I am visiting my presence?" Cash inquired.

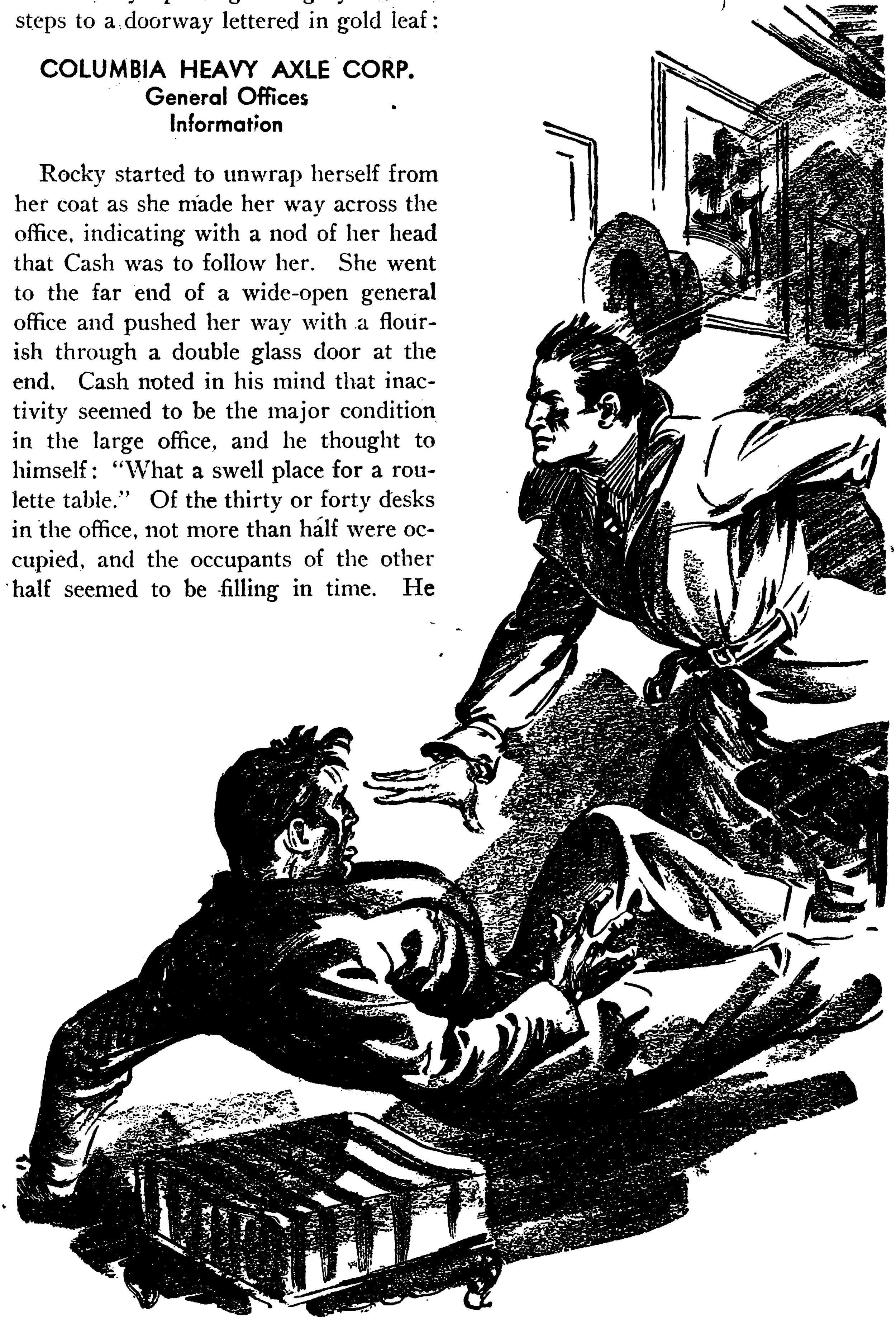
"I am sort of comptroller," she replied, and the implication was that she was in complete sympathy with Cash's estimate of his own relations with the company.

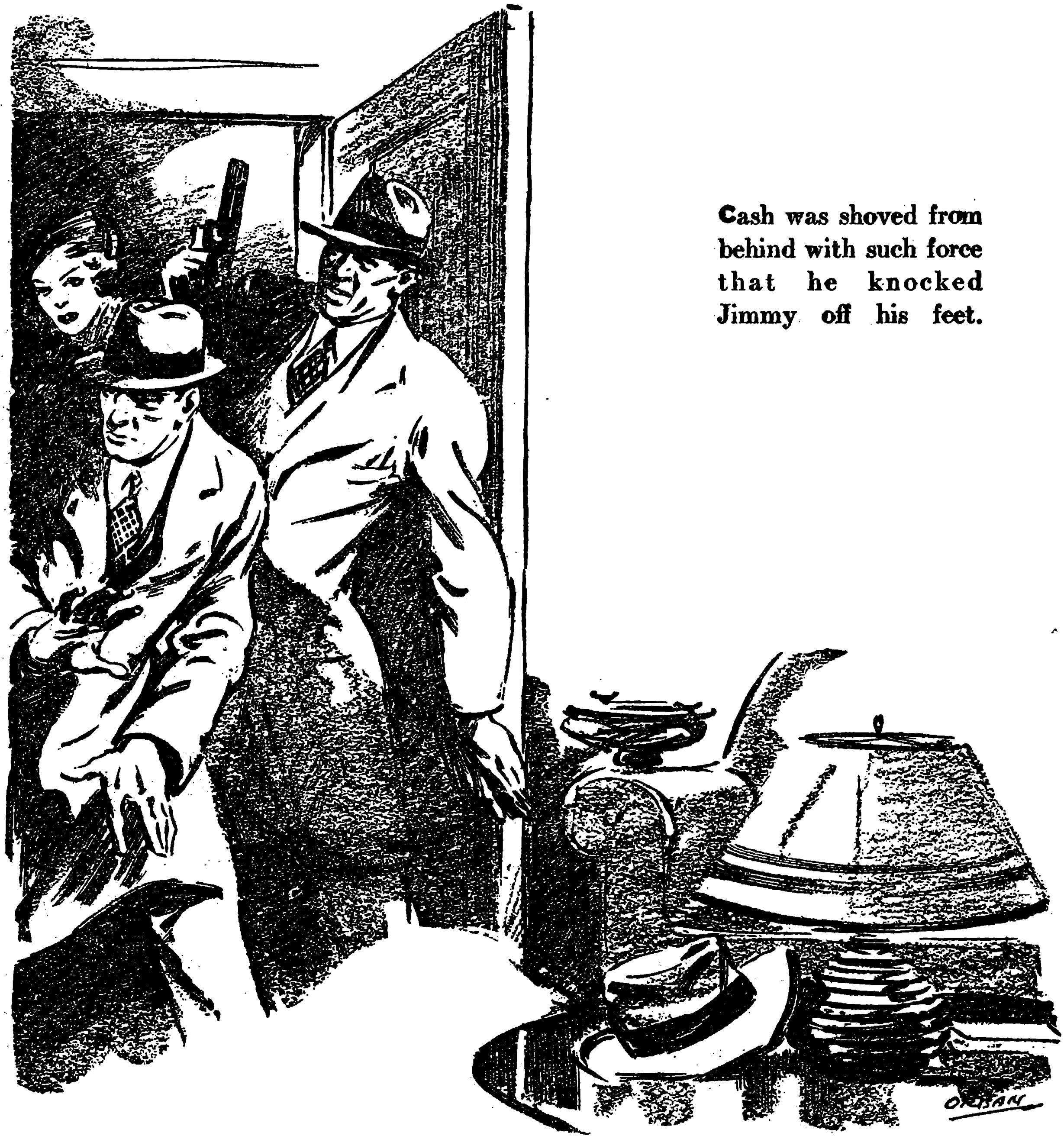
"I hope you are as careful with the company's money," Cash replied.

They drove on in silence. Some few minutes later they arrived at the gateway of a huge factory. It looked huge to Cash. Actually, it was about three stories high and seemed to be spread all over the landscape. A gateman opened the gate and Rocky drove in. She pulled into a parking place obviously reserved for her. They got out and she led the way up a flight of gray wooden steps to a doorway lettered in gold leaf:

COLUMBIA HEAVY AXLE CORP.
General Offices
Information

Rocky started to unwrap herself from her coat as she made her way across the office, indicating with a nod of her head that Cash was to follow her. She went to the far end of a wide-open general office and pushed her way with a flourish through a double glass door at the end. Cash noted in his mind that inactivity seemed to be the major condition in the large office, and he thought to himself: "What a swell place for a roulette table." Of the thirty or forty desks in the office, not more than half were occupied, and the occupants of the other half seemed to be filling in time. He





Cash was shoved from behind with such force that he knocked Jimmy off his feet.

noted a tall, handsome, heavy-set man with graying hair and hoped that he was an important cog and on his side—if sides were to be chosen. And he had a premonition that he wouldn't long remain in the dark.

Rocky walked a few steps through the corridor beyond the glass doors and stopped before another which was open. It led into a large office, and Cash read the name in reverse on the opened door. He saw it was the office of Malcolm Holmes, general manager of the plant.

Holmes was a capable-looking man. He was in that indefinite period somewhere between forty-five and fifty-five. He had large hands, which Cash immediately noted, and a prominent forehead, which at first appearances compensated for the recession of his chin. He was agile on his feet, negotiating the desk behind which he had been sitting much faster than a man many years his junior might have made it.

"Glad to have you with us, Mr. Gorman," he said, extending his hand.

"Gardiner telephoned me this morning. Forgot about the hour's difference in time, I guess. Sent Rocky for you as soon as he called. Now we'll run over this stuff in a few minutes. Must get out to my place. Have the missus fix up an apartment for you that'll be your own until you can get settled, unless—"

"I wouldn't think of it, Mr. Holmes," Cash replied. "I've sent my associate, Mr. Ranger, who made the trip with me, to the Columbia Arms. Miss Rockwell recommended it. Nice of her to pick me up. So let's get right down to business."

Holmes was momentarily off his guard. His expression dropped from him in a flash, and his face assumed hard lines. Cash immediately saw that he was not an easy man to deal with.

"Miss Rocky, here," Holmes said, waving to the girl, "will fix a place for you. You came on us rather suddenly, you know."

"I imagine I did," Cash said, "but don't worry about me. I'm accustomed to working out of my hat. To get to the point, all I'm interested in is: How much work have you got, how much are you hoping to get, and how soon can we increase what you are hoping to get? In short, how soon can this plant be turned into a going business?"

"Those are difficult questions to answer, Mr. Gorman," replied Holmes. "Perhaps there is no answer. But we are considering right at this moment a contract for two hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars from the Eagle Co."

"Considering?" asked Cash. "Phineas told me you had signed it."

"No, we didn't sign it. We committed ourselves to it," he returned. "It is a temporary arrangement pending our ability to show the Eagle Co. we can deliver."

"Can we?"

"That is something for Fred Cotes to decide; he's working on the estimates now. He's our plant superintendent," Holmes replied.

"In the meanwhile, waiting his decision, which I hope we'll have today," said Cash flatly, "I'll look over your most recent financial statement."

"First I would like to inquire, Mr. Gorman," said Holmes, "the extent of your interest in the company. Just a formality, you know, so we can work better together."

"This will satisfy you, I hope," said Cash. He withdrew from his wallet pocket inside his coat a paper. It was a power of attorney given to him hastily the night before by Phineas T. Gardiner to represent the latter's twenty thousand shares of stock in the operations of the Columbia Heavy Axle Corp. Holmes studied it. It seemed to satisfy him, and as he was setting it on the desk after having read it carefully, Cash reached over and picked it up. He folded it and returned it to his pocket.

"This only empowers you to act for him," said Holmes. "It doesn't answer my question. Don't think me impertinent. But my life savings are tied into this plant, and I do not want to see my plans for it ruined by an expert from New York who only knows figures and cannot understand the exigencies of a manufacturing plant—the problems in heavy industry."

"If you are that much concerned," said Cash, "I'll tell you that Gardiner and I are in this thing up to . . . to my neck! And if you know Mr. Gardiner, you know what I mean."

"No, I do not," said Holmes, "but you imply that yours is the greatest risk. I know he assumed control of our common stock when Kirby Stowe tried to manage this company from a plush seat in a New York broker's office."

"Your implications are partially correct," said Cash. He saw the pleasant expression flit off Holmes' face and the hard lines replace them again. He decided that the man could not hide his feelings very well.

"If financial obligations are worrying you," continued Cash, "forget them. If we can make money enough to pay off the obligations, Gardiner is committed to see us through." He knew it was a bald lie, but hoped by it that Holmes would be encouraged.

Holmes smiled affably. "That's wonderful," he said. "Now I can go to work on these new commitments. I'll have those statements to you in a few minutes."

Rocky beckoned Cash to a room off Holmes' office.

"This was Mr. Stowe's office until he died," she said. "His son never used it. You might as well."

"Don't they have any stock left in the company?"

"I believe they have," she replied, "though that detail of the comptroller's office is not in my hands. Mr. Holmes could tell you."

"No," said Cash, "it's not that important. Just curious how a fellow with a place like this should want to give it up for a chance to gamble with those wolves in New York."

"I hear that you are something of a gambler, Mr. Gorman," she said.

"Ah," said Cash, "my reputation precedes me! Don't believe half of what your mother told you about bad men from Broadway, and nothing of what you read in the big-city columns. What's the gossip on Thomas Jefferson Gorman?"

"Nothing much," she said, "except that you are called Cash; but why, I don't know; that you have been associated with Mr. Gardiner in several enterprises, all of questionable character, and that—"

"I'm not prying you, Rocky," he said, "but go on; you interest me."

"No," she said, "I've said too much."

"You haven't said enough," Cash returned, pulling a roll of bills from his pocket, a roll small for him because there wasn't more than a thousand dollars in it. But because it was bills of all denominations, with a five-hundred-dollar bill around the outside, it looked like a million. Cash was certain it was more than Rocky had ever seen outside of a bank in her life. She didn't say as much, but she didn't have to. The astonished expression on her pert face said it for her.

"That," said Cash, "is why I'm called Cash Gorman. I believe in dealing in currency, and as far as the other things you've heard—they are probably all true. But you fall short. The climax is always good. What is it?"

"There's none that I know," she said. "Can you supply it?" The last was hinged in sarcasm which twisted from her mouth sharply.

"I can. Those infamous enterprises you've heard of always turn a profit."

"That will be a pleasant change if your luck follows you here," she said.

"My dear girl," Cash said patiently, "allow me to correct you. Making a profit is never luck. It is a science, never forgetting the smallest detail of any enterprise in which you find yourself. Now forget business! Does one have a social life in this hole of industrial stagnation, or aren't you the social arbiter of the village?"

"Decidedly, you will have a social life," she said, "and here it comes."

Without introduction or a stop for anything which might have been going on, a lady dripping silver foxes entered the office. Behind her came Holmes. She extended her hand.

"I'm Dell Holmes," she said. "Mal has told me you are not coming home with us until your family arrives. It's ridiculous."

"It would be, Mrs. Holmes," replied Cash, "if my family did arrive. I have none. None save my keeper, Mr. Ranger, who is arranging quarters at the hotel."

"Well, stop him," she stated, as if her orders ordinarily were carried out. "Get him out of there and to our place, Rocky." Even the command to Miss Rockwell seemed to fit her appropriately.

"No, no, no," said Cash. "I couldn't think of it. I'm a pest who sleeps after breakfast and goes to bed when other people are getting up and an entirely disagreeable person to have around. Forget our social problems, please, Mrs. Holmes."

"As you wish," she said, "but I'll not forget your social problems."

It was apparent that she was satisfied with Cash's presentability. He wanted to assure her that Jimmy was passable, too, but decided that had best wait until she saw him. But Cash hoped that Jimmy would relieve him of some of the pressure he knew was coming.

CASH, who prided himself on his memory for details, could not recall exactly how he managed to get rid of Mrs. Holmes, and Mr. Holmes with her. But he had a slight suspicion that Rocky's hand was in it when it was all over. She came into his office with the man who had attracted his attention in the outer office when he first arrived.

"This is Fred Cotes," she said. "You'll want to know him. Mr. Gorman, Fred."

They shook hands and Cash shot her a look of thanks.

"Your social life is filled for tonight," she said, "so I'll fill in for your secretary until you get one. Mrs. Holmes sold out for dinner at seven thirty. Tails. I hope you own 'em."

"And ravishing in them," said Cash.

He turned to Cotes and said: "Fred, this is a hell of a situation. Tails and heavy axles. Sounds like a mixture of oil and water."

"And if you don't think it is, Mr. Gorman," Cotes replied, "take a look at that." He dropped a telegram across the desk toward Cash.

It read:

SORRY BUT RED RIVER WORK SCHEDULE IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU TO DUPLICATE STOP HAVE CLOSED WITH THEM STOP REGARDS
BLAND

"Who is Bland, and what is Red River?" asked Cash.

"That's our competitor," said Cotes, "and this means that the Eagle—Bland's the production director of Eagle Motors—contract goes to Red River."

"But," said Cash, "Holmes told me just a few minutes ago that you were working on something, commitments or something, and would have them ready today."

"You catch on fast, Mr. Gorman," said Cotes. "I haven't finished our work schedule yet, so how does Bland know I can't meet them."

"I would like to know that, too!" said Cash.

"You'll have fun trying to find the

answer," replied Cotes. "I've been trying to find out about things like that for two years."

Rocky came into the office again with a sheaf of papers. She handed them to Cash. His eye went immediately to the bottom of the column labeled liabilities and reached the figure: 1,231,465.31. From that he glanced to the assets figure: 446,578.22.

Hasty calculation told him that things were hopeless as they stood.

"Tossing two-hundred-thousand-dollar jobs into the ash can will never help this thing," he said, tossing the statement to Cotes.

"I've seen it," he said, "and I sometimes wonder if it's supposed to be helped!"

CHAPTER IV.

GET OUT OF TOWN!

CASH had to admit that Mrs. Malcolm Holmes, apparently the self-coroneted queen of Columbia's social life, really could put it on. Rocky had told him she insisted on having a few "friends" in to meet him. A hasty estimate by the always conservative James Ranger brought forth the figure somewhere between "the auto show at Grand Central Palace" and "an Army-Navy football-game crowd in the lobby of the Ben Franklin Hotel." To Cash it honestly seemed like that. He thought a "few friends" might mean twelve or fifteen guests, but Mrs. Holmes had obviously canceled all other social obligations for Columbia for that night.

As Cash was introduced to more persons than he would ordinarily meet in a place like Columbia in his entire stay in the city, he noted an undertone of discontent. He got it in the billiard room —or, rather, the answer to some portion of it.

"Tonight's our wedding anniversary, and we were leaving for Detroit when Dell called," said one man, "and I had to call off the party. The wife is fit to be tied."

Cash sought out Jimmy at once and told him their popularity in Columbia would be at the bottom of a social poll if one were to take one at the moment.

"Apparently," said Cash, "this is like one of those movie parties we couldn't get used to in Hollywood. Nobody cares who the guest of honor is, only everybody had to come to obey a command. I'm afraid we'll not be missed if we slid out of this shindy. These affairs are never entertaining, especially when I'm the alleged guest of honor. I've probably laid plans for the ruin of half of the homes in Columbia, happy or otherwise."

Jimmy was sullenly silent. He didn't relish the idea of leaving such a lavish affair with such attractive ladies present. They managed to reach a small room which housed the console of an organ, the pipes of which confronted a person entering the Holmes establishment in a cathedrallike foyer. Cash was at the point of rescuing his wraps when Isabel Rockwell wafted through the front door, a vision in a sky-blue thing which he knew instinctively was never dreamed up in Columbia—and which, if he was any judge of ladies' wear, which he was, would have the maids and matrons green-eyed within thirty seconds. He decided to enjoy the fun.

She rushed up to him, her efficiency look completely gone.

"Don't tell me you are leaving," she said, and added in an undertone, "I've brought Mr. Red River to meet you."

A busy man in his middle forties rushed over the foyer in her wake. "This is Mr. Noller, our enemy, and I'm consorting with him," she said, introducing her escort.

Cash moved away from the wrap room. "Glad to know you, sir," he said. "Don't tell me this lady is your pipe line into our happy little establishment."

"I never talked business out of office hours," replied her companion smoothly, ignoring what Cash had meant to be a thrust.

"I find it the opposite," said Cash. "You meet such interesting contacts loose in such a gathering as this. But since I'm the guest of honor here, suppose I show you where the refreshments are and where you can drink to your pleasure and where I shall suffer. Peace, it's wonderful. The local—"

"—yokelry will be impressed by our appearance together?" said Noller. "I think not, Gorman. In this business we are at each other's throats like thieves during business hours, but we manage to live together like civilized people and forget it all in our social life."

"That's the pleasantest three hundred thousand dollars I've ever lost," quipped Cash.

Noller stiffened. Cash brushed past him and beckoned them to the bar. Jimmy joined them in a moment and devoted his entire attention to Rocky. Such pleasantries were to Cash incompatible with things as he found them at Columbia Axle on his first visit, and he wanted to get away. The exit was accomplished in a short time. Anticipating such a departure even before he left the hotel, he'd told his favorite taxi man, whose name proved to be Mullins, that he would be leaving at eleven and for him to return and wait. Cash was in the cab with Jimmy at 11.05.

They were listening to a radio broadcast when the car was forced to the side of the road on the return trip from the Holmes establishment, which was on the river side of the town. The street was heavily shaded and the lights were far apart, separated by trees which gave it the aspect of a dark tunnel. It was impossible to tell how many men there were, but there were enough for Cash and Jimmy to realize that common sense would be no part of assault on this mob. The door of the car was opened.

"Is this a reception committee?" Cash asked.

"Get out, Gorman," said the leader.

"Don't do it, Cash; make 'em fight," said Jimmy. He started to reach a foot toward the man who was standing in the road. He was cracked on the shin with a hard instrument for his impetuousness.

"Listen, stooge," said the man, "button your lip. Get out, Gorman."

Cash got out. He was directed to get into the car ahead. He realized he'd been duped into getting out of the car by two men; and to his chagrin, he found a lone occupant on the back seat of the sedan that had pressed his car to the curb. One of his guards stayed with Jimmy and their driver, and the other climbed into the front seat after Cash had got in the back.

"Just to keep the records straight, Gorman," said the voice in the back seat, which was now even more like Steele's. "Turn on the dash light, Swenson, and look in that front seat, Gorman."

The man switched on the dash light, and Cash peered over the top of the seat. The man was fingering a submachine gun.

"And we'll use it," said the man beside him.

"Henry," Cash said, calling the man by the name he'd heard him called in

New York, "you sound like a character out of a horror movie. Don't tell me you've come back to plague me with my Hollywood past?"

"I've come to kill you, Gorman," said the man, as if he were saying, "I've come to take you to a strawberry festival."

"That's damn decent of you," said Cash. "I was considering just such a course myself for ever coming to this town."

"I'm not fooling, Gorman," said Henry, "get out of town and leave this axle company alone or I'll blow your head off."

"You sound as if you meant it," said Cash.

"I do," replied the man. "Now get back in that hack of yours, and don't try to follow us or I will be forced to take measures. But let me tell you this: We have plans for Columbia Axle, and you or Phineas Gardiner are not going to stop them. Get out of town and leave Columbia Axle alone or you are a dead duck. And quick!"

He shoved Cash out the door of the car which the occupant of the front seat had opened. Cash nearly catapulted into the road. He recovered himself and walked back to his car. The guard walked up to the front car, away from Cash's taxi, as if he were walking away from an idle roadside conversation. He climbed in the other car, and Cash directed the driver of his taxi to get into town quickly.

CHAPTER V.

CLASH WITH HOLMES.

MULLINS hurriedly drove them to the Columbia Arms. He was dead white with fright. "You'd better come upstairs with us for safekeeping," said Cash. Mullins didn't require a second invitation.

"What a nice party we've got into!" remarked Jimmy. "But it would be nice to know who's tossing the bombs and who they are aiming at."

"It would," said Cash, "and before I go another minute I want to satisfy myself that our old friend Herr Steele is comfortably in the sealed confines of mother earth."

"You mean that phony Nazi agent out in Denver?" asked Jimmy.

"The same one," said Cash, "our friend— By the way you'll be interested to know he's the same fellow who chilled you in New York just yesterday."

"He certainly gets around," said Jimmy.

"Which, my good friend," said Cash, "is conclusive evidence that he is operating with a liberal expense account; which gets us to our first fact: for whatever reason he wants us out of town, he's got more than machine guns to accomplish his purpose."

"What makes you think he's related to Steele?"

"His voice sounds like his," said Cash. "It would be entirely possible for Steele to have had a plastic job done by an unscrupulous physician and turn up here."

"What difference would it make?" asked Jimmy.

"We'd know what to expect, since we've met the gentleman before," said Cash. They were at their floor, and Jimmy went to the telephone without delay.

"Might as well satisfy your curiosity while this instrument is within our elastic expense," he remarked.

"My friend is very droll, Mullins," said Cash, "pay him no mind."

Jimmy called the State Penitentiary

of Colorado while Cash told Mullins how to avoid trouble for the night. He suggested he leave the hotel by the rear entrance and walk to his home from the rear, leaving his car parked in front of the place for the night. He gave him a ten-dollar tip and told him to report anything he heard or saw, or any suspicious developments, to him at once.

"There's nine or ten more to match that one," he said. "You can hear a lot of things in that hack, and I want all the pertinent facts. And tell no one, not even your wife, what happened tonight, or it is apt to become suddenly very unhealthy for you as well as me."

"I don't know nothing, boss," said Mullins. Cash let the driver out and turned to Jimmy. He'd just replaced the receiver on the telephone-instrument stand.

"You can proceed without caution," said Jimmy. "Your friend Henry is a newcomer. Steele is very dead and spread to the winds of the wide-open spaces."

"For tonight, James," said Cash, "you are a night watchman. I want you to go down to that plant and pick yourself out a handy spot where you'll be unobserved and observe everything about it you can—especially if it has any visitors."

"In these garments?" asked Jimmy, waving his hand before him, indicating the tails.

"Your comfort," remarked Cash, "is a matter of your own concern, not mine."

"If it is your idea to keep me outside these precincts so that you can have privacy," said Jimmy, "you misjudge my immunity to adventure. I'm ready for the hay and will not disturb you while you add up the box score of this shooting brigade."

"James," said Cash, "your snoring would disturb the dead. Get on your bicycle."

Jimmy switched his clothing and was out of the hotel suite in a few minutes, and Cash took stock, a peculiarity he practiced whenever a puzzling situation arose. He found events taking high and mysterious turns. The doubts and question marks were more plentiful than the facts:

Was Gardiner's only motive to sell him half of a bad debt? This could not compensate for Gardiner's agreement to sell him ten thousand shares at the market of the moment when they reached their agreement, which was a price of $2.43 a share for a one-hundred-par-value stock. No, Gardiner had some other motive in mind because he had agreed to sell Cash the stock according to his ten-thousand-dollar option for the market price; and Cash knew that Gardiner had gathered in the twenty thousand shares he controlled in payment for a bad debt of Stowe's which ran into six figures. It was unlike Phineas T. Gardiner to accept less than a penny on the dollar for a debt. There must be another reason.

But why was a man named Peter Coyne willing to pay a premium of seven dollars for the stock, and then murdered before the deal could be consummated? Through his mind flashed the events immediately following Coyne's appearance at his hotel. The mysterious and near felonious assault had occurred after Coyne's visit; so, obviously, neither was associated with the other, since his New York hotel visitors beat a hasty retreat when he mentioned the law. Cash pondered it, and then the seven-dollar premium as against the dollar offer by Henry.

"What a chump!" he said aloud.

"Of course! Coyne was representing Henry. He failed. Blackout. Blackout!"

The conclusions tumbled through his mind. Coyne was a legitimate broker, no doubt, enmeshed in foreign entanglements. He acted for Henry's principals, probably Nazis, against his better judgment; he rebeled after he failed to make headway with Cash and refused to tackle Gardiner, probably threatening to expose Henry and his crew of unscrupulous saboteurs. Industrial sabotage! What a situation to have your last ten thousand dollars stacked against a ring of spies eager to stop the defense machinery from acting. But why? Why Columbia? It was practically a bankrupt organization as it stood. Which brought Cash to the case of Malcolm Holmes.

Holmes was obviously a greedy, grasping person who might have invested his money in the firm; but if he did, why had the company fallen back so steadily under his management when most allied industries of the automobile field were showing profits? Could Holmes be committed to sabotage? And where did Noller fit?

"It'll clear up in the morning, no doubt," Cash murmured to himself hopefully.

JIMMY wakened Cash with a rude thrust.

"You're on, chum," he said. "I sat across the street from that joint all night long and nothing happened."

"Well, put that down as an oversight, for the plant will be carefully watched from henceforth on," replied Cash.

"Why?" asked Jimmy.

"James, learn the 'Stars and Stripes Forever,' we are doing our bit," he said, jumping out of bed. "We are in the midst of a plot of industrial sabotage."

"What?"

"I thought that would get you," said Cash. "Well, that's the story, James. Get our friend Jack Connelly on the phone and inquire about our credit."

"If he's half the detective I know he is," said Jimmy, "he'll check our bank balance and stay home."

"Bank accounts have little to do with the credit I command, James. I'm a fast man with a dollar. It counts with Jack Connelly. Get him to fly to Detroit and telephone me from there. At once!"

Meanwhile, Cash had been going through the meticulous process of shaving his heavy, bluish beard. He jumped into clothes which Jimmy Ranger automatically laid out; and then Jimmy left a call with the operator for nine o'clock. It would then be ten in New York and the "elegant and sane Mr. Connelly will be arriving at his business as a gentleman should."

"All too true," remarked Cash. "I now go into the marts of industrial trade myself. Let me know how you do with Connelly."

Cash found Mullins waiting for him at the door.

"Is everything all right, Mr. Gorman?" he inquired.

"Take me to the factory, Mullins," he said, "and let your fears be forgotten. You're in this thing now, so you might as well get paid for risking your neck. Figure out a fair price for your car, and your salary is forty dollars a week on that while I'm here."

Mullins nearly fell headfirst into the driver's seat to start the motor. He drove to the Columbia Axle plant without delay.

"I won't want you for a couple of

hours," said Cash. "Hack around town and call me back in two hours. Keep your mouth closed and your ears open."

In the perigrinations of his mind last night, Cash had been unable to find a proper slot for Malcolm Holmes. He wanted to get the answer to that at once. He thought a closer study of the financial structure of the company and the status of that department would contain a key.

"You certainly made a hit with Chan Noller last night," said Rocky as he entered his office. "You'll do better in this business if you forget the melodramatics attached to your background."

"You wouldn't be telling me to handle our competition graciously, would you?"

"No," she replied hesitatingly, "but I think you'll achieve your purpose if you tread more lightly."

"What is my purpose? I don't know it myself. Maybe you can tell me something about it. Who owns the locally owned block of stock?"

"I presume Kirby Stowe's heirs," she said, "only I wouldn't know that. Mr. Holmes always manages the stock department."

"Let's look over this financial statement again," he said. "Maybe there are some answers here."

He studied the figures on a large yellow bookkeeping sheet before him. He ran down the items and across the double, widespread page for the accompanying figures, and then ran down to the bottom. Without looking up from the page, he asked:

"Rocky, does this three-hundred-thousand-dollar item under anticipated revenue include the Eagle contract?"

"That was not a contract, Gorman," said Holmes, who was standing in the doorway of Rocky's office which separated Cash from him, "that was a commitment which might have been a contract if Chan Noller hadn't beat us in with the figures."

"What is this, then?" asked Cash.

"I meant to tell you about that yesterday and I thought of it again last night, only so many things were happening it slipped my mind," Holmes replied blandly.

"That's a big slip," Cash commented dryly. He raised and dropped the financial statement.

"Well," said Holmes, "that's some new business we are getting—from heavy-duty jobs."

"Fine," said Cash. Fred Cotes came in.

"Maumee Tool is ready to ship," said Fred.

Cash, with his always eager, prying mind asked: "Ship what?"

Before Holmes could reply, Cotes said: "The new machinery!"

"Those are details I'll go over with you when you are at your leisure, Mr. Gorman," said Holmes, and over his shoulder to Cotes he said: "O. K., Fred."

"Just a moment, Fred," said Cash. "What's this new machinery for? Seems to me you've got a lot of machinery around this place that's not doing enough work as it is, without putting in more not to work. What's it for?"

"That will be covered in your item of question on that statement," said Holmes. "Get the contracts, Rocky." Miss Rockwell went to the safe in her office.

"What's this machinery costing us?" asked Cash, without great concern, and as if he weren't particularly interested in hearing the answer.

"It's a full line which will pay for itself in a couple of years," said Holmes.

"I hope," said Cash, and then he was directing his full attention on Holmes. "What's the bill for it, couple of thousand dollars?"

"Heavy-industry retooling is much more expensive than that, Mr. Gorman," put in Cotes. "Maybe a couple of hundred thousand would be nearer."

Cash flashed a look at Holmes. He nodded his head.

"Why, that'll bankrupt us! How many of these things can we sell; what's the market?" Cash asked.

"We have those figures for you," replied Holmes. Rocky returned with the contracts and Holmes handed them to Cash. He digested them in a flash.

"Let me see the insurance policy on the shipment of this machinery, Miss Rockwell," he said. Rocky went into her office and returned with it. "That'll be all, Fred," Cash said to Cotes, and then to Rocky. "I'll call you. Please close the door."

When they had gone, Cash turned to Holmes and said: "Do you mean to tell me you have loaded this plant down with a hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth of machinery to supply a market of a hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars annually?"

"That heavy-duty stuff, Mr. Gorman, is where I consider the money to lie," said Holmes, "and I put through the contract and there is nothing you can do about it. I am empowered as the general manager to execute contracts."

"That power is hereby remanded," said Cash.

"I'm sorry, but I am in control of this operation through the three of the five outstanding shares of management stock. I say that contract goes through as it stands."

"What is this management-stock business?" asked Cash.

Holmes went from the office and returned presently with charter and minutes of the stockholders' meetings of the Columbia Axle Corp. He turned to a page in the minutes and leafed over the charter. He handed both of them to Cash. Jeff read them both carefully and learned that the charter created five shares of management stock, which was to be held by the employees of the corporation or by the Stowe family. The board of directors once had created a bonus arrangement to be paid against this stock; and the stockholders approved of the action. That was when the late but hardly lamented elder Stowe held all the stock.

"You have three of these five shares? Who has the rest?"

"I presume Kirby Stowe!" replied Holmes.

"O. K., Holmes, you asked for it! When you get it, don't whine."

Holmes smiled at him pleasantly and passed through the office of Miss Rockwell to his own.

"Rocky," called Cash, "get that Ranger out of bed at the hotel. Time he was up and doing."

CHAPTER VI.

CASH TAKES AN ORDER.

THE buzzer which passed for a telephone bell sounded with a very dainty tone. "If that's the telephone," mumbled Jimmy, "get the phone man to change the tone and have it make a noise."

He picked up the phone.

"He's on his way and will call you directly," said Jimmy before Cash could open his mouth. "Now stop playing Simon Legree and let me get some sleep."

"Get out of that couch and get down

here. Bring Mullins with you," said Cash.

He hung up the telephone and sent Rocky for Fred Cotes. Presently Cotes came in. Rocky went to leave and Cash beckoned her to remain.

"Fred," he said, "how much money is there in these heavy axles at $3.20 each, which is our price?"

"Not more than forty or forty-five cents," replied Cotes.

"So if we get all the business in the country for two years we'll make a profit of something like thirty-two thousand dollars at a risk running into half a million! We could do nearly as well as that in government bonds with no risk!" Cash concluded.

"Doesn't sound like good business to me," said Rocky.

"Not the way I heard it," said Cash. "Here's the deal, my friends, and I'm telling you because I need both of you on my team," he added, "and I hope you are with me. I want to put this place on a going basis, but somebody here is interested in seeing it go bankrupt, and somebody else is interested in wrecking the establishment for other purposes."

He told them the story of his experience of the night before. "I'm only telling you this because somebody is very serious about this business, and I assure you from this moment henceforth the development of Columbia Axle will be exciting. I'm hooked, and I don't sucker very easily."

"What do you want me to do?" asked Cotes.

"What closed down most of the factory?" Cash asked.

"Our main line has been operating on a part-time basis for two years," he said. "With that running, we'd be in the clear in one line of new cars."

"With ~~defense work~~ possibly coming our way, is there any chance of getting out with the heavy-duty stuff?"

"Yes, with that main line on full time," said Cotes.

"What sort of work does the main line do?" asked Cash.

"Standard work, trucks, medium-weight cars, and some of the heavy-weight light lines. Capacity, four thousand a day, with a nice write-up on each one," said Cotes.

"Who gives out this business?" asked Cash.

"That's in Detroit, where we have an agent."

"Who's he?" Cash asked.

"Gordon Stanley," replied Rocky.

Cash recognized the name at once; one of the greatest in the motor city. He knew that, if he couldn't get the business, there must be a reason—if the factory could deliver. "Get him on the telephone," Cash directed Rocky.

"Fred," said Cash, "have you looked into any of the possibilities for getting some of this transport or light armored-car business from the government? Even if we can't get rich, we can at least have the machinery doing some good."

"Cash," said Cotes, "I'm going to call you Cash—"

"Everybody does; go ahead," interrupted Cash.

"Cash," said Cotes, "I can make some changes in that main line with five-and-dime replacements and put it to work in three weeks' time."

"Start looking over the possibilities and line up the changes," said Cash. "I'll be back tomorrow morning and you tell me how much money you need to do it. This is between you and me, and strictly on a cash basis."

"Oh," said Cotes, "Holmes will know."

"Not if I pay for it out of my pocket and you use only your most trusted men," said Cash.

"O. K.," replied Cotes, "I'm with you."

Jimmy came into the office as Cotes left, and Rocky announced that she had Mr. Stanley on the wire.

"Hello, Stanley; this is Jeff Gorman. Met you in Florida—remember me? Associate of Phineas T. Gardiner."

"Sure, Cash," said Stanley. "How are you?"

"Fine," replied Cash. "I'm with the Columbia Axle. I'd like to talk to you. Can you fly up here, or—"

"Not before tonight," said Stanley.

"I'll be down," said Cash. "When'll you be free?"

"Contact my office when you come to town and I'll leave word. I'll meet you at the Detroit Athletic Club as soon as you get here," replied the agent.

Cash slammed down the phone and directed Jimmy to get reservations on the first ship to Detroit. One was leaving in two hours. At two o'clock, Cash met Jack Connelly getting off the New York plane at the Detroit Municipal Airport. Jimmy contacted Stanley and made the appointment for thirty minutes later at the DAC.

"Come on; ride into town with us, Jack," said Cash. "I'll explain the situation."

"Who gets the bill?" asked Connelly.

"I do," said Cash.

"And it'll get paid," said Jimmy.

"If you say so," put in Connelly, "he must have money in that rubber-check account. Who's swindling you now?"

"That's what you are going to try to find out for me," said Cash. He told him about Coyne's murder.

"They're trying to pin that on foreign entanglements," put in Connelly, and handed Cash a New York paper.

Cash glanced through the story and nodded his head. "I suspect it, too," he said. "That's what I want to know. Who these guys are." He related the episode in New York and the return engagement with the threateners in Columbia.

Then he went into detail about the state of financial affairs with the Columbia Axle Corp. and his suspicions. One was that Noller had a pipe line into the office and could undersell them before they entered a bid; and another was that Holmes was systematically trying to run the place into bankruptcy. He couldn't decide why.

Then Cash told about the party at the Holmes menage the night before, and Connelly replied: "The reason for Holmes trying to sabotage the place, as you so nicely put it, is to take it over for himself. Then he'll be the ultra big shot of the town, and you might find no better reason than that."

"Maybe," said Cash, "but I think you'll find somebody with a bundle of money behind him, backing his play. I will operate quite differently, perhaps, when I know who wants this company ruined and for what purpose. Find out for me."

"Where do you come in?"

"Phineas T. Gardiner and I are hooked alike," lied Cash.

"Won't you ever learn," said Connelly. "If you take on one more turkey that that guy couldn't peddle in a junk yard, he'll have permanent possession of the Gorman goat trophy."

"No cracks, please, my good man," said Cash. "Just get me the answers to those questions. We're at the Columbia Arms and we don't know you until you have some answers."

CASH ordered the cab stopped, and Connelly got out. Jimmy and Cash drove on to the DAC and Jack returned to the airport for a flight to Columbia. Stanley burst upon them like an unleashed tiger—a black tiger. His hair was black and vigorous, his black eyes snapped and danced at the same time, and he was filled with things to do and people to see.

"There's only one thing I want," said Cash, "and that is the two second largest lines we can handle of standard stuff."

"What you can handle, Holmes hasn't been able to give me delivered," said Stanley.

Cash looked at Jimmy significantly. "That's what I thought," he said. "But we are doing business in a different manner now, and have no fear of not being able to deliver. We'll give you up to six thousand a day, beginning three weeks from the day we get the go-ahead order."

"I've got the chance at a helluva contract, and there it walks through the bar," said Stanley. He directed Cash's eyes to a heavy-muscled man loping across the room as if he had a horse under him. He was big, rawboned, and looked like an antitrust newspaper cartoonist's idea of the "industrialist." Stanley got up from the table at which they were seated and brought the man over.

"This is Mike Higgins, of Federal Motors, Cash," he said.

"The famous Cash Gorman?" asked Higgins, shaking hands, pulling out a chair and seeming to sit down all in the same motion.

"How famous, I don't know," said Cash, "but that's me."

"Anybody who can draw cards with that swindler, Phineas T. Gardiner, is all right with me. How is the old shyster?" asked Higgins. "And what the hell is he up to?"

Cash told him of his association with Gardiner in the Columbia Axle. Before he was finished, Higgins called for a boy.

"Get me the closing price on Columbia Axle," said Higgins.

"Was it active today?" asked Cash. "I've been in Columbia, trying to produce, and I'm unfamiliar with Wall Street, anyway."

"If that thing can move on the sort of production you have been doing up there," said Higgins, "it must be terrific. What have you got?"

"Well," said Cash, "we are retooling one department, getting ready for a new line."

Jimmy glared at him in open admiration of his boss' adroitness with trade terms.

"Oh," said Higgins. The boy returned and handed him a slip of paper. "So, Gardiner comes into Columbia Axle and wow! Look at that!" He handed Cash the slip. It stated simply: "Columbia Axle—opened, 2½; high, 48; close, 43½."

Cash's eyes popped out of his head. He could hide his astonishment from the others, but Jimmy knew something was wrong. He had sense enough to know it was serious, and he remained silent. Cash handed him the slip, and Jimmy did everything but faint.

"Let's run with our profit," he said.

"A smart man," said Higgins. "That's what that shyster is doing, you can bet on that."

"I don't think so," said Cash. "In

fact, Mr. Higgins, I think you misunderstand Mr. Gardiner. Phineas is really a very smart operator. All that has happened, no doubt, is that word of his entrance into Columbia has got out and the boys are trying to get in."

"If I know anything about Phineas, and I know plenty," Higgins said, "he probably won the Columbia Axle for a bad account with Kirby Stowe, who tried to run a heavy-industry manufacturing plant from a leather seat in a Wall Street broker's office, and wound up broke, but with an ambassadorship, a daughter married to a worthless count, or something, and a son with an unused mind."

"That seems to dispose of the Stowes and the Columbia Axle," said Jimmy.

"And you, too," said Cash. "Get that Gardiner gentleman on the phone." Jimmy got up, feeling that he was to substitute for Mr. Gardiner while Cash performed a miracle of some sort.

In a few minutes Jimmy reported back that Gardiner was on the wire, and to his amazement Cash leaped at the opportunity of actually speaking to Gardiner on the wire. He wished he'd accomplished the call. But he hadn't.

"What the hell'd you get him for?" asked Cash, once they were in the foyer.

"I didn't," said Jimmy. "Now I feel better."

In a few minutes they returned to the room where Higgins and Stanley were seated. "I don't know whether you'd better go after both of those," he said. "Get one. Phineas has had some word from Washington he won't *tell* me about. He's flying out in a couple of days."

Mike Higgins ordered Scotch and soda, and Cash said he'd have some buttermilk. The waiter looked at him seriously. "Buttermilk," Cash repeated. "A man in my position with sharpers like these men cannot afford the luxury of a taxed brain."

"Mike, here, can give us one," said Stanley. "We're in the market for some business, Mike. We'd like to figure a job."

"I've got so much of this government stuff I'll take anything I can get anywhere," said Mike.

"You've hired yourself an axle factory," said Cash. "Stanley, attend the details."

Cash and Jimmy journeyed to the airport with higher hearts than they'd come. "James," said Cash, "we're in business. Cotes said he could retool for this work from the five and dime. Here's his chance. And by the way, what in Heaven's name is retooling?"

"What an industrialist!" exclaimed Jimmy.

CHAPTER VII.

STRESS AND STRAIN.

CASH and Jimmy arrived at the plant in Columbia at the same time in the morning, though Jimmy had spent the early hours checking up on freight arrivals. He informed Cash as he got to the plant that the machinery was at the depot and would be hauled to the factory that day. This was disconcerting news. Bankruptcy and prosperity were neck and neck.

Cash summoned Cotes to his office at once and informed him of his good fortune at Detroit.

Cotes replied that he would be able to *reorganize the main line* and get it working within three weeks.

"And how long if we work nights?" asked Cash.

"Well, half the time. A week and a half from delivery, and it'll cost twenty-one thousand dollars," Cotes said.

"O. K. Money will be no problem after I talk with Phineas today just after the market opens," said Cash. "And where are you putting that heavy stuff from Maumee?"

"That goes on the third floor in the next building," replied Cotes.

"Where's the main line?"

"Oh," said Cotes, "that's around the corner in the big plant. Haven't had that opened all month. Saving on coal."

"Fine," said Cash, "get in there with a few hand-picked men and don't let anybody know what you are doing."

Rocky entered and announced that a Mr. Arman, an engineer from Maumee Tool, was waiting to see Mr. Cotes.

"Here is the new stuff Holmes ordered, and the man to make it work," said Cotes.

They met Arman together. As Cotes had said, he had come with the machinery and was ready to go to work on the installation. Holmes assumed control. He took Arman up to the site, and the man protested.

He spent a day inspecting the steel work at the joints, the beams and cross girders, and was assured by Cotes that there was heavier stuff on the third floor, the site Holmes selected for the operating base. After some delay and calibrations, Arman was satisfied that the floor was so constructed that it could stand twice the weight of the heavy-duty machinery and the vibrations from two such machines. He went to work with his men at installing it.

"When that gets going," said Cash to Cotes, "it will be a race between ruin and riches, and I hope you catch up to us first. By the way, how did Holmes swing this much credit with our state of affairs?"

"Promises, I suppose," said Cotes.

While Arman was working with a crew on the third floor assembling the big new machinery, Cotes was working his crew day and night in the old plant, reassembling the lathes and carriers for new work. Stanley telephoned Cash two days later and flew into Columbia with an armful of papers one night and brought them to the hotel. He had signed contracts from the Higgins plant to deliver the full output of a medium-weight line; usable in light trucks or heavy light cars alike.

"You're in the money, Cash," said Stanley, "but I'm afraid you must have Holmes' signature on the contracts."

"Why?" asked Cash. "Why not me?"

"You're not an officer," replied Stanley.

"Yes I am. There was a meeting just now, and I was elected president," replied Cash.

"You can't fake with a cutey like Holmes. You must send out a notification of meeting, and since he has some stock—"

"He has?" said Cash. "How do you know?"

"Why, didn't you know?" asked Stanley.

Cash admitted his ignorance.

"It's a long story," said Stanley. "I don't know what it is, but there are five shares of management stock in this company which hold the key to the works, and if you and Phineas want to bring it before the SEC you can toss Holmes and his power over the company out in the street. I think he got his common through advancing money to foolish Kirby Stowe, Jr., and so far he's gotten away half the stock of the young man, if not three or four of the shares."

"Are the shares broken?"

"They are," said Stanley. "I understand there are twenty quarters, and I'd like to bet you that Holmes has two and three quarters or three shares."

"I hope it's half," said Cash. "Say, about Kirby. Would he do if I appointed him assistant to the president?"

"O. K., I'll leave the contracts. You tell Kirby when to say yes and no and he'll do all right," said Stanley.

Next morning Cash sent Rocky and Jimmy on the trail of Kirby. He came to Cash's office. Cash was becoming blatant in his manipulations, Jimmy said, but he told Jimmy to look in Mr. Holmes' office.

"You won't find him in here for several days," said Cash. "He's trying to find out what I did in Detroit. I told him I was there."

Cash high-pressured Kirby, who fitted Mike Higgins' estimate perfectly. He looked like a man with an unused mind, and with very little room to operate the said mind. He probably photographed well on a horse for the gravure sections, thought Cash.

"Kirby," said Cash, "we are getting ready to get into large-scale operations. We are putting new machinery in. We are doing things, but we do not want to bother with a reorganization at this stage of our development. We have learned that as owner of management stock your signature is required on all contracts to make them legal."

"Never have before," said Kirby.

"It will be necessary in the future," said Cash.

Fred Cotes stepped into Cash's office and nodded to Kirby. "The new load is ready for a test run upstairs in No. 3," he said. "Want to watch Arman turn it?"

Cash thought this would be an excellent chance to show Kirby the progress the firm had made. He neglected to mention that the operation of the machine they were going to watch tested meant an open door to ruin. Cotes led the way, and Jimmy escorted Kirby, with Cash taking up the rear. Cotes went out through the offices and into the next-door building, up a staircase to the third floor.

Arman was standing on the huge black and menacing machine, inspecting cocks, screws and pistons. He climbed down on a platform which ran along its side.

"Here she goes, Fred," he called. "Everything is all right." He threw a switch and there was the hum of a dynamo and a belt catching. It roared into speed, and then Arman threw the switch all the way back. The machine roared into high to test its full capacity.

Suddenly there was a cracking sound. The machine's roar drowned it momentarily, and then it came into the consciousness of everyone with violence. The end of the machine, which hung three quarters of the way along the cross-beam girder, dropped through the floor—and disappeared from sight!

CHAPTER VIII.

MACHINE HELL!

THE building vibrated. There was a second thunderous crash from the floor below and the shriek of tortured metal, over which a hideous scream rang out. The heavy floor beneath Cash's feet seemed to crumble away. Desperately he flung himself backward. A hand clutched his shoulder and dragged him toward safety as another section of the concrete floor disappeared with a roar. Dust, thick and choking, came up and filled the room in a foglike cloud.

"Run for the door," a voice shouted in his ear, the hand on his shoulder shoving him toward the wall. "Follow the wall."

It was Fred Cotes' voice.

"Where's Ranger?" Cash asked. He raised his voice, shouting: "Jimmy!"

Ranger's heavy-set form loomed up beside him, Jimmy asking hoarsely: "You O. K.?"

"Yeah," Cash said. "Cotes is here, too. Make for that light over there—the window."

Again a piercing shriek came to their ears.

"Arman—the engineer from Maumee—he's jammed in there some place," Jimmy shouted. "We've got to get him out."

"Don't be a damned fool!" Cotes yelled. "Everyone—make for the wall and follow it along to the fire doors."

"You can't leave the guy," Jimmy protested, while Cash stumbled toward the walls.

"Can't do anything here," Cotes choked. "Too much dust—smoke. Can't see. Have to work from below."

"How do you get these windows open?" Cash demanded, struggling with one of the heavy, steel-framed windows.

"Don't open it," Cotes said, pushing him along the wall to the left. "Cause a draft. Fan a fire."

Cash, recognizing the good sense of this argument, followed along the wall after several other people. As they neared the far end of the room the dust haze cleared and he made out Ranger and a number of workmen in front of him and, looking around, saw Cotes, who pushed past him to the door, shouting: "Keenan! Keenan! You down there?"

A sturdy voice answered up the stair well. "Right here, boss."

"Check off the men as they come down," Cotes shouted.

"O. K."

Alarm bells sounded throughout the building and Cash heard the stamp of running feet from the floor below. A siren sounded.

"I didn't smell any fire," he panted as he ran down the steps with Cotes.

"That's the plant emergency siren," Cotes said. "Can't take any chances. Fire department coming. God, that poor son of a gun from Maumee got it. He was right on the platform when she buckled."

Ranger clutched at the handrail and vomited.

"Steady, fella," Cash said, catching his arm. "What's the matter?"

Pale, almost green-faced, Jimmy shook Cash's hand loose. "I'm O. K.," he said. "Saw Arman go through that machinery. Got both his legs smashed to a pulp. The blood was squirting all over the place."

Cotes pushed ahead of them and shoved his way through the men crowding the doorway to the second floor, shouting for order.

"How's it on this floor?" Cotes demanded of Keenan, one of his foremen.

The man waved toward the huge room behind him. "She's hangin' between here and the first floor. No fire—not yet."

Cotes nodded, pushing past him. "Send these men downstairs and count 'em. Report immediately."

He pushed out through the door, with Cash and Ranger behind him. The dust here was settling. Windows had been opened, too, in order to clear the atmosphere.

"No fire," a man with a headband labeled "Emergency" shouted, as he caught sight of Cotes. "She's hangin', though. Electricity's cut off in this whole wing. There's a man pinned under a beam."

They followed the emergency-squad man through the dust haze and Cash's opinion of Cotes went up to the one-hundred-percent mark as he saw the order which already was coming out of the confusion. Whatever else might be wrong with this plant, its workmen were well organized. Two emergency squads were helping a workman with a badly gashed head toward an exit. Others were roping off the danger area and moving curious or bewildered men toward the exits.

As the atmosphere cleared they saw a gaping hole from the floor above, from which, occasionally, chunks of concrete were still falling. In the center of the big room there was another hole, through which a tangled mass of machinery sagged drunkenly. The foreman of the emergency squad hurried forward.

"She smashed into the No. 2 compressor and dug a hole through the floor here, Fred," he reported hurriedly. "There's a man caught under the beam. Another one's buried in there. From upstairs."

Cotes nodded briefly. "Did the cross-beam on this floor hold?"

"Yeah—the compressor sits over that beam. The stuff from above smashed into it and then went off to the left, or the whole damn business would have gone down into the paint shop. We're stringing cable to it here. Fire squad is standing by downstairs."

From beneath the huge, broken steel girder that slanted diagonally from the ceiling above to the wreckage on the floor, came a terrible shriek: "Oh, my God . . . my God . . . please—" The voice trailed off.

Two men with acetylene torches were working over the end of the beam, attempting to cut out the imprisoned workman.

"He's out—" Cash said. "Where's Arman?"

Cotes repeated the question, putting it to the foreman of the emergency crew, who ignored it for a few minutes while he superintended the work going on. "That the guy from upstairs?" he asked finally.

Cotes nodded. The emergency squad leader shrugged his shoulders helplessly, waving toward the machinery hanging through the floor. "Smashed all to hell—he's dead. Look, Fred, if we pass this cable through here, do you think—"

Cotes, having by this time expertly sized up the situation, plunged into the work of securing the hanging wreckage before it could do any more damage; and Cash and Jimmy Ranger, finding themselves in the way of busy rushing men, withdrew to a point outside the roped-off area, while a doctor appeared on the scene and knelt beside the man who had been pinned under the steel girder.

They watched silently as he put his stethescope to the man's heart and then took a hypodermic syringe from his kit and injected a light fluid into the man's arm.

"Morphine," Jimmy said.

"Not when he's unconscious," Cash said. "I don't think so, anyway." The doctor got up after a few moments and said something to the men with the torches.

"How is he, doctor?" Cash asked, as the doctor passed them.

"Dead. I tried adrenalin as a last chance, but it was no good."

"That makes two," Jimmy said. "What the hell do you suppose happened? That's a heavy machine, but there are heavier ones on this floor."

Cash examined the gaping hole in the ceiling above. "You see what gave way there?" he asked.

"The steel girder," Jimmy replied, puzzled.

"More than that," Cash replied slowly. "That machinery was set on a double crossbeam—it formed almost a square there—meant especially, I presume, for placement of heavy-duty machinery like that."

Cotes confirmed this impression later. "One girder giving away in that floor, would have been peculiar enough the way that floor is built, but to have the whole thing fall apart—I can't understand it. The steel must have been defective." He shoved his hat back on his head and pulled at one ear in bewilderment. "But I had heavier stuff than that right there two years ago. That floor area there should take twice that much weight without thinkin' about it twice."

Cash inspected the machinery on the floor on which they stood. "How about that spot where the compression shaft stood? Does it have the same kind of crossbeam arrangement under it?"

Cotes nodded. "Identical."

"This one here didn't give way though, huh?" Cash said. "It took the entire weight of the falling floor and machinery and shuttled it off into the aisle section and smashed only a small hole in a weaker spot—"

Cotes considered this, his brows knitting. "That's right." He frowned. "What are you getting at?"

"Sabotage!" Jimmy exclaimed. His face was overcome with a puzzled look. "But there wasn't any explosion."

Cotes' eyes widened. "Good God, you don't really think—"

Cash nodded. "Sure, I'm suspicious, but it's just suspicion. Isn't it possible?"

"I don't know," Cotes said slowly. "But there's no reason for sabotage here. This wasn't a National Defense Order. And, besides, it just couldn't have been done without tearing up the whole floor, and I can personally testify that that floor hasn't been torn up."

"Dead end," Jimmy commented.

Cash motioned toward the beam end on which the two men with acetylene torches worked. "There's nothing the matter with the rest of that girder. It just—well, it broke at one end and bent down." He pointed toward the other end of the gaping hole. "The section on the other side of the cross braces there just broke, but the rest of the girder held pretty well—it's dropped only a couple of feet."

Cotes followed his glance. "Most of the weight was— My God! It broke on each side of the crossbeams!"

"And this side gave way first," Cash nodded. "That's why it fell this way. However, if the other side had not given way under pressure, it still could have held—I mean, there might have been a lot of cracks and settling, but the floor would have held, wouldn't it?"

Cotes studied the huge hole. "It could have. Concrete would have come down, but the frame should have held until we could relieve the pressure. Let's go up and take a look at that topside."

Cash shrugged. "I'm more interested in seeing the end of this beam where it broke. That's the one which gave first. We can see it in a moment." He nodded toward the workmen gathered around the body of the man who had been pinned. The skilled welders had cut through the girder and the imprisoning end was being lifted from the body. After the dead worker had been removed, Cash grimly knelt beside the small beam end which had been burned from the main girder and inspected it. "What's this look like to you?" he asked Cotes.

The production man, his face pale, asked for a rag. Wiping the still wet blood from the end of the beam, he inspected it closely. "Can't understand that," he said in a strained voice. "Seems to be rotted through." He sniffed suspiciously.

Cash wet his finger and put it to a ragged end of the beam which had been unspotted with blood and then put his finger to his lips.

"Rotted through, or eaten through?" he asked.

"I . . . I don't know," Cotes said. "Does it taste acid?"

Cash nodded grimly.

"I don't like to believe that," Cotes said. "It makes it look like some of our men might have been mixed up—" He shook his head. "It isn't possible, anyway. They still would have had to tear up the floor."

Nevertheless, he reluctantly bent over, putting his tongue to the steel where Cash had touched it. Straightening up tautly, he said, "No doubt of it in my mind."

"What kind of acid?" Cash asked.

Cotes shook his head. "Don't know. But if that's what did it, the acid would have to be damn strong stuff."

Silently, the three of them considered the end of the steel girder.

"You better get the hell out of there," the emergency squad foreman, his voice sharp with strain, warned them. "You're liable to get a hunk of concrete on your heads."

COTES swore softly but violently as they drew back out of the danger zone. "Pure murder, the dirty skunks!" he said. "The lives of two good men lost. The man down here who was killed was Billy Riggs, one of my best machinists."

"Go easy on that murder stuff," Jeff warned him. "Some of the men might hear you."

"What the hell was the idea of all this?" Cotes asked explosively. "I don't get it. If they knew we were working on defense orders, why the hell should they smash up this end of the factory—we're retooling in the old works."

Cash himself found this mystifying. If the plan of the saboteurs was to wreck the company financially, they must be very stupid. A plant which already had contracted for defense orders could, by showing reasonable cause, obtain a loan through the defense commission or the RFC. Even so, the only person outside of themselves who knew about the defense order, was Kirby Stowe.

"My God," Cash said. "Maybe that's where the leak is. Kirby Stowe!"

Jimmy Ranger looked around in sudden alarm. "Where the hell is Kirby?"

Cotes stared. Cash, too, blinked in sudden astonishment. They had been showing Kirby the new machinery when it fell through the floor.

"Any of you guys seen Kirby Stowe?" Cotes yelled to the men working around them. Nobody had. What's more, nobody seemed to care a hoot. The three of them made for the stairs on the run.

"One thing's sure," Jimmy Ranger said. "If Kirby knew anything about what was going on, he wouldn't have been standing up there with us when the floor fell apart."

"You don't know how dumb that guy

is," Cotes panted. "It might have slipped his mind."

"Nobody could be that dumb," Ranger said.

Search of the third floor, however, failed to reveal Kirby Stowe. Nobody had seen him. Cotes was alarmed. "You don't think he's under that mess of machinery, do you?"

Suddenly the door to the lavatory opened and Kirby Stowe appeared. "Is everything all right?" he asked, his voice quavering.

"Where have you been?" Cash demanded.

"I . . . I was in there," Kirby announced, pointing to the lavatory door. "I went the wrong way. But it seemed all right in there, so I just stayed. What happened?"

Cotes started to explain, but Cash gave him no chance.

Grasping Kirby by the coat lapel, he pulled him toward him, scowling at him fiercely. "Listen, you punk—Arman was on that platform when the machine went through. He's dead. So is a machinist downstairs. That's murder in this State, mister, and you go to jail for life!"

Kirby stared at him. "What's murder? What are you all looking at me like that for?"

Jimmy Ranger drew back his fist. "Let me slug it out of him, Cash—I've been wantin' to push one of these damn Fifth Columnists in the teeth for a long time."

He swung on Kirby. Cotes caught his arm at a wink from Cash.

"Keep out of this, Jimmy!" Cash said. "All you have to do is frisk him. We'll let the G-men work on him."

"What do you mean?" Kirby Stowe cried, his face pale and his body trembling as Jimmy patted his pocket for guns. "I haven't a gun. What are you doing? I'm no Fifth Columnist! What's murder?"

"Don't give us that, you heel!" Cash snarled. "You're the only man who knows we are retooling for defense who could let the information leak. Don't play innocent with us. We've known right along the Nazis were trying to get control of this plant, but we didn't know who the inside man was. But we know now. And you better start talking, pal. There were two men killed just now and it wasn't any accident. It was sabotage. Come on. Talk! Who doctored those girders with acid?"

Kirby Stowe looked around at the three grim faces confronting him and suddenly seemed to gather his dignity.

"I wouldn't do anything like that," he said. "I wouldn't deal with foreign agents. Maybe I've been on the dumb side, but I'm an American. I only told one person about those defense orders and he's an old friend. A very honest man."

Cash, Cotes and Jimmy Ranger exchanged startled glances. They hadn't really expected anything from Stowe.

"FBI agents have been interested in this plant for months," Cash said sternly. "You'd better clear yourself or you will be in hot water. If your friend is an honest man, he hasn't anything to worry about. If he isn't, it's just too bad for you, but Walker will get him eventually."

Stowe hesitated. "The only man I told was Noller."

CHAPTER IX.

TRIP TO NEW YORK.

CASH was satisfied that Kirby Stowe was telling the truth. In his present mental condition, he was incapable of a lie. Cash counted on that. Moreover, Cash felt certain that murder was not in Chan Noller's mind—and he ventured a weak thought that Holmes was not an advocate of such desperate efforts to accomplish any purpose, either. Which left Thomas Jefferson Gorman holding a cat with four or five heads. He was positive now that the burden of the heavy-duty machinery was lifted from the cash balance of Columbia Axle that there might be a concentrated effort to sabotage it from other directions.

In Cash's balancing of the books, it appeared that Holmes, if bankruptcy were his plan, might conceivably have plotted the accident. But this was impossible, because Holmes would know that the machinery was covered by insurance until it was running; for the Columbia policy would not become ineffective until the going unit was delivered by the Maumee man. Further, Noller would not be interested in ruining machinery for a line much heavier than anything he did and which would invite the Columbia competition out of his way.

"That means," he said to Cotes and Jimmy after the frightened Kirby Stowe had signed the Higgins contract and fled, "that there is somebody other than any one either of us knows who is vitally interested in ruining us."

"This gets bothersome," said Jimmy.

"Yes," replied Cash, "and unless Fred can get that machinery going on the main line, it will be very bothersome. In fact, Mr. Ranger, I might tell you that eating will be a bother. You might be very dead and uninterested in eating."

"Yeh," said Jimmy, "who's killing who?"

"I'd like to know," said Cash. "Fred, put on guards and arm 'em around that other building. See the sheriff, or whomever you have to see to get permission to arm them. Tell him we are preparing for defense work. That'll stop him!"

"Are we?" asked Cotes.

"We are, if we can get the money needed to retool that place you talked about fixing up with a new permanent line for five-and-dime-store prices. How much will it cost?"

"Not more than sixty thousand dollars," said Cotes.

"Cigarette money," said Jimmy sarcastically. But it missed fire.

"Definitely in this business for the possibilities of return," said Cotes, with great interest.

"Arrange the credit," said Cash.

Cotes walked out.

"Pardon me, Mr. Industrialist," said Jimmy, "but have you got five dollars? I'm a panhandler in a strange town. And I know you'd be insulted if I asked you for a dime for a cup of coffee."

"No cracks, James," said Cash, "and don't be spending dimes on coffee. Charge it until further notice . . . . or the credit runs out."

IT was not long before the Columbia Axle plant, in fact all of Columbia, was seething with some obvious and some mysterious activity. Sheriffs, prosecuting attorneys, police, detectives and G-men, swarmed through the plant until Cash didn't know whether he was in a factory or a police headquarters.

"It's like trying to do business at Centre Street, New York," he said. By six thirty, with the aid of Rocky, Cash knew that sixty thousand dollars for the entire factory was a remote chance. The physical assets were mortgaged to the hilt. The anticipated income was pledged in seventy directions before the contracts were executed and the outstanding stock was virtually worthless.

"Fred," he said to Cotes, "can I get a plane out of here to Detroit tonight?"

"No more tonight," said Cotes. "Can't charter one, I don't think, either. What's on your mind?"

"I've got to get to New York before the market opens in the morning," he said. "Who's got the fastest car in this town?"

"I have," said Cotes, "and I drive faster than anybody you've ever met off a racetrack."

"Jimmy," said Cash, "you are taking charge tonight. Watch that main building with your life. If you need help, find Connelly. I'll be back before noon tomorrow—I hope. You're coming with me, Rocky, and fetch those statements. How're we making out on that credit plan, Fred?"

"I ordered the stuff and they'll be getting the stock parts here in the morning and following through as they get the special parts. I didn't mention cash—or credit!"

"Good," said Cash. "Never pay a bill—when you're in our condition—until its payment is demanded."

Fred Cotes was not fooling. He had wheeled a long black sedan in front of the factory, propelled by sixteen cylinders. He eased it into gear and tooled around the winding streets near the factory over a short route to the main highway to Detroit. He handled the car as if he were driving one with a wheelbase that could be turned on a dime.

Cash was tired. Rocky sat with Fred and he sprawled over the back seat and rested. The hum of the motor, when they hit the main highway, lulled him to sleep. Detroit was better than ninety miles away, so there was plenty of time for rest. Cash dozed. Soon he was conscious of the motor's hum becoming a roar. The car didn't sway, but Cash felt they were going fast. Very fast. He glanced over the front seat to the speedometer. It read 104.

"Fred," he asked, "are the speedometers accurate on these heavy cars?"

"Yeh," said Cotes, peering intently at the road, "until you get over a hundred. Then they slow down a lot." Cash fell back among his upholstered cushions and moaned. Rocky howled in the front seat. They were in Detroit in less than two hours and Cash managed to bribe two seats on a plane that was leaving at once for Cleveland. There was no chance for a New York seat until the morning.

"We're getting warmer," he said to Rocky as they flew over Lake Erie. "Every step is nearer New York."

At Cleveland they managed passage on a flight from Chicago and got into New York with the dawn, where Cash spurned the car to the city and took a cab directly to Gardiner's home.

"Would you mind telling me, since we've spent the night together, Mr. Gorman, what this is all about?" asked Rocky.

"Not at all, Rocky," he said. "You are dressing. You look important, even if a little red-eyed. But that's with loyalty and not hoop-la! Phineas will like that. Besides, he'll want to ask a lot of questions which you may know the answers to. I'll answer all the lies. But when you are on legitimate ground with Phineas he can become mighty stubborn. Especially, if you do not know anything about a subject."

"May I ask what the subject is?"

"Axles in general."

The cab stopped at a limestone house on upper Fifth Avenue and Cash hopped out to the sidewalk and paid off the driver, tipping him liberally enough to cause Rocky to stare at him in a startled fashion.

"Are you accustomed to throwing money away like that?"

"All right. All right. Right now you're either on the doorstep of a golden opportunity to pull Columbia up by its axle, or perhaps to step into a local magistrates court for disturbing the peace. Phineas is fussy about being waked up before seven thirty two, or some such figure. Here goes."

CASH punched his finger on the bell and held it for a minute. A full minute of bell ringing can be a long time in the stillness of seven a. m. on upper Fifth Avenue.

The butler came eventually and peered through a shutter.

"Come, come, Ivins," Cash said, "open up. I'm having breakfast with Mr. Gardiner. Talked with him on the phone late last night after you were asleep, I presume."

"But, sir," said the butler, reluctantly opening the door. Cash and Rocky pushed in.

"Yeh," said Cash, "I know. He doesn't get up for thirty-seven or twenty-one minutes. Or something. Well, tell him I'm here, and I'm in the house and if he isn't down here in five minutes, I'll call the police."

"Not that, again, Mr. Gorman," said the butler, recalling another occasion on which Cash had threatened police and had produced them like a magician produces rabbits out of a hat.

"What shall I say brought you? Why must you see him here and not at the office?"

"Just say it's urgent business, and if I'm caught, it may be death before breakfast—his breakfast!"

The butler was gone before Cash finished.

"Are you accustomed to scaring butlers out of their morning appetites?" asked Rocky.

"Think how nice it would be for you if I were to come into your life with every breakfast," Cash replied.

"I can think of nothing more ghastly," she said.

Cash fell into a convenient chair and dozed, apparently. Rocky was ill at ease, feeling like the unwanted guest at a wedding. After some minutes, the butler returned and said: "The master is very angry at me. Says for you to see him at the office at ten thirty. He will not be disturbed now."

"You may serve breakfast for three instead of one, Ivins," replied Cash. "Miss Rockwell and I will wait."

"But, sir—" stammered the butler.

"But, sir, yourself," interrupted Cash, "and tell that sourpuss who underpays you that we are waiting and I do not expect to be kept waiting more than twenty-five minutes. Tell him that every minute over twenty-five minutes will cost him money; plenty of money and maybe some of his time."

"Time, sir?" inquired Ivins.

"Yes," said Cash, grasping at an idea, "time! Tell him I'll wait exactly until eight ten, and if he isn't at breakfast I shall taxi to the airport and fly to Washington and he'll hear from the war department before noon!"

"Yes, sir," said Ivins and fled up the stairs like a man on a string. Soon, Gardiner was gliding down the lone marble staircase.

"Harumph," he said, "what's this business of going around frightening innocent people. Now, listen to me, Gorman! I don't know what you are up to," and then spying Rocky he added, "and with pretty young women in it at this hour of the morning it can mean no good. Anyway, I want no part of you or any scheme you are cooking up."

"Phineas," said Cash, as if he had not heard him, "this is Miss Rockwell. Rocky, may I present Mr. Phineas T. Gardiner, the Wall Street tycoon, through whose veins flows vinegar of the tartest vintage? Miss Rockwell, you will be interested to know, Phineas, my evil-minded friend, is custodian of the money you are not going to lose in Columbia Axle. She is virtually comptroller of the corporation."

"I beg your pardon," said Phineas, temporarily, and against his better judgment, on the defensive, "but that makes no difference. She can't be in her right mind to be associating with you so early in the morning."

"Phineas," said Cash, "have you no manners at all? We have been flying all night to be here, and all we get for our pains is your ill temper. Get some coffee on the stove before I fight. I cannot fight in the early morning on an empty stomach."

"Go and buy your breakfast," Phineas snapped. "I'm not feeding all the refugees who land in this city."

"Your welcome," put in Rocky, "is of the warmest." She directed her observation sotto voce at Cash. But Phineas heard.

"Young lady," said Phineas, "when this fellow comes here at this hour, when he is up at this hour! Er . . . well, it is no honor to be selected as the host. He's after something you've got which he hasn't. Probably money."

"Tut, tut, Phineas," said Cash, "don't you think you ought to think of me? My feelings? For example, what of rigging the market with Columbia. Nice profit and so un-S-E-C-ish. They won't like! Neither will the war department!"

"War department," put in Phineas. "War—"

"Yes," said Cash, "war department! We are in the defense business. We are supplying Mike Higgins with many great contracts in his effort to produce armored cars and light tanks. And what are you doing for your country? Rigging a market to get back a profit at my expense."

"What are you talking about?"

"And what has Holmes been doing here?" asked Cash.

"I haven't seen him," Phineas replied with some hesitation, "but once."

"But you *did* see him," said Cash. "Look, Phineas. You are hooked this time. And you might as well recognize it. I can save your bacon for nothing more than your guarantee of credit."

"I wouldn't guarantee your credit for your groceries," replied Gardiner. "I put everything into that half-baked thing I could dig up and I'm getting out of it on the money I sucked out of you—"

"That was all right a few days ago," said Cash, "but now you'll be interested to know two or three things. The plant is on the verge of bankruptcy. That's not pretty if a stock of a bankrupt concern zooms from scratch to a fifty-dollar value."

"It's not fifty, it's forty," said Gardiner.

"And it's not worth forty cents at the moment," said Cash.

"Furthermore, as a majority stockholder, you are responsible for its indebtedness while you can't do anything to incur the debt," said Cash. "And I'll admit it's not a pretty picture. But if you'll just sign a paper guaranteeing sixty thousand dollars' worth of new machinery, I'll hand you the company in three months on a silver platter—and with interest."

"How much does it cost me?"

"The ink in your fountain pen," said Cash, "and believe me, you'd better sign, for if I ask Miss Rockwell to begin reading you the actual and attested financial statement, you'll faint. Assume the role of guarantor, for another credit is like dropping one drop of ink in an inkwell. Nobody will notice it."

"Let's get some coffee, you scoundrel," said Gardiner. "You always wind up getting me into trouble whenever I think I have you in some."

"That's too bad, Phineas," said Cash, " 'cause you'll enjoy this mess of trouble. Cops and robbers; murders, more murders."

"What are you talking about?" demanded Gardiner.

"I'll tell you after breakfast," replied Cash as Ivins announced breakfast and all three trooped out of the room toward a sun parlor on the east side of the house. During the meal, Cash pulled a paper he had had drawn up before he left Columbia and he pushed it along the table to Phineas just as Gardiner had taken a mouthful of coffee. Gardiner almost lost the coffee.

"You're crazy, man," he said, "if you think I'll sign that."

"You'll sign it and like it," said Cash. "I hadn't meant to put the pressure on you, Phineas; but there's been murder at Columbia and Lord knows what else. And it all points toward industrial sabotage. And that includes your market manipulations."

"But, I tell you," said Gardiner, "I had nothing to do with that! The stock became active without me offering a share and when I did offer some tentatively, I give you my word of honor, I withdrew from the market."

"Why?" asked Cash.

"Because," said Gardiner, "the stock which had gone up ten points, skyrocketed when traders got on to my offering."

"Ah," said Cash, "and the big bad wolf of Wall Street became frightened. I see. Well, that's further evidence of industrial sabotage. And, Phineas, so help me, if you do not sign that paper, I'll be convinced that you are in cahoots with these foreign agents, whomever they represent, and I'll tell G-man Walker. Because I've made up my mind that I'm going to see him before I go back to Columbia."

"Cash," said Gardiner, "you can't believe that!"

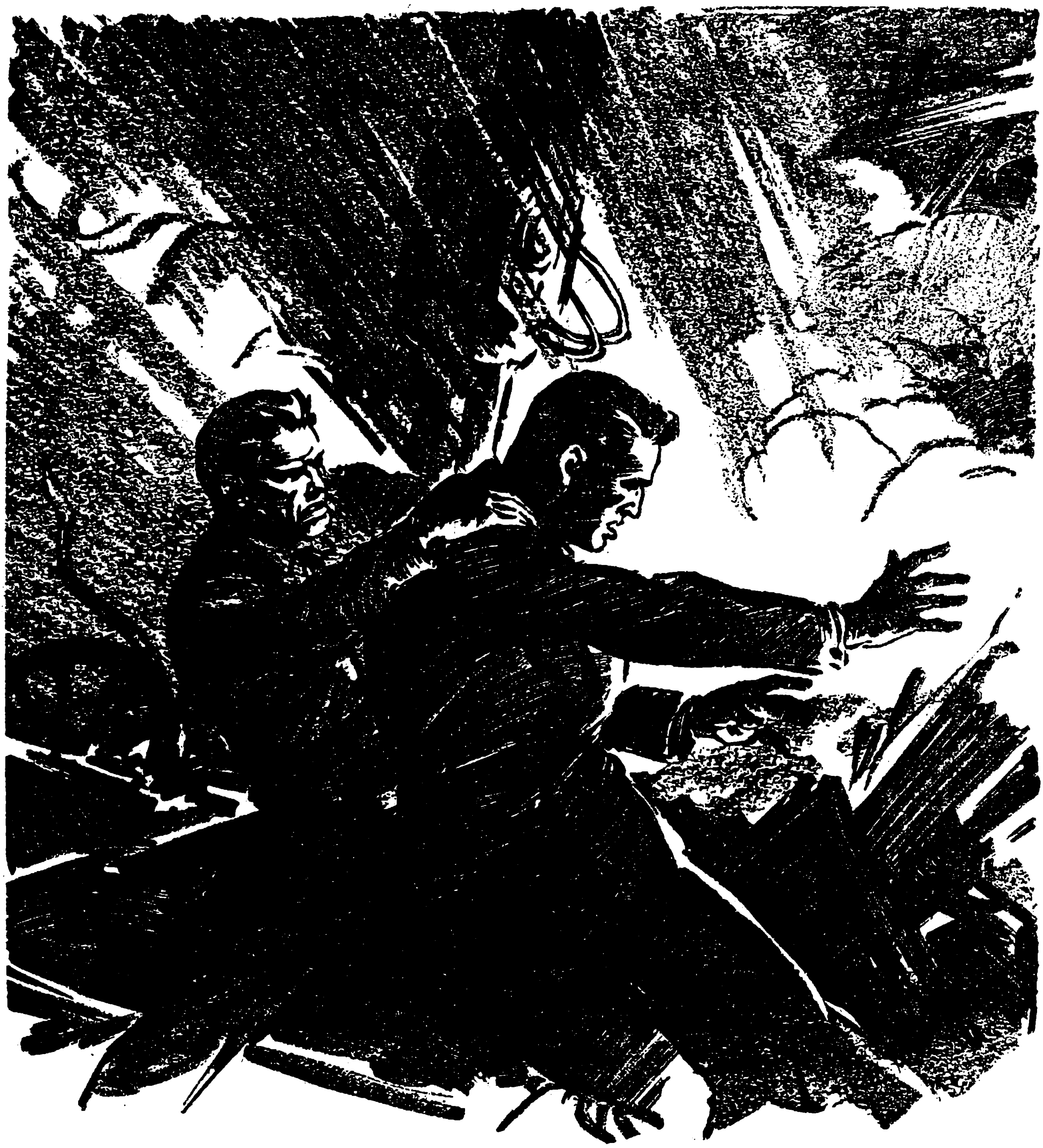
"I'm amazed at your gullibility, Phineas," said Cash, "or does the thought of Mr. Whiskers frighten you. It makes no difference what I think. There it is on the table. Sign the paper and I'll tell my story to Walker, putting you in a light that favors you."

"You're blackmailing me!"

"In a nice way!" said Cash. "You were willing to swindle me. Sign here." He pushed a pen and pointed to the paper. Gardiner signed.

CASH immediately lost interest in his coffee. He pushed back his chair, invited Phineas to Columbia for the fireworks, which he said would not be long in starting. Then he bolted from the room, with Rocky in his wake. On the sidewalk, he plunged into a cab into which he had pushed Rocky and demanded full speed to a certain bank on midtown Fifth Avenue. He directed Rocky to remain in the cab while he went into the bank. He was back on the street in fifteen minutes.

"Catching bankers off their guard is a fetish of mine," he said. "That fellow in there is the eastern agent of Rossi, my San Francisco banker. I know the time difference, so I leave him with a half promise of covering me for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars—at least I'm covered until noon. By which time, I'll have that machinery on its way to Columbia. Let's get to a hotel for this operation."



They drove to the Roosevelt where Cash was given his usual suite.

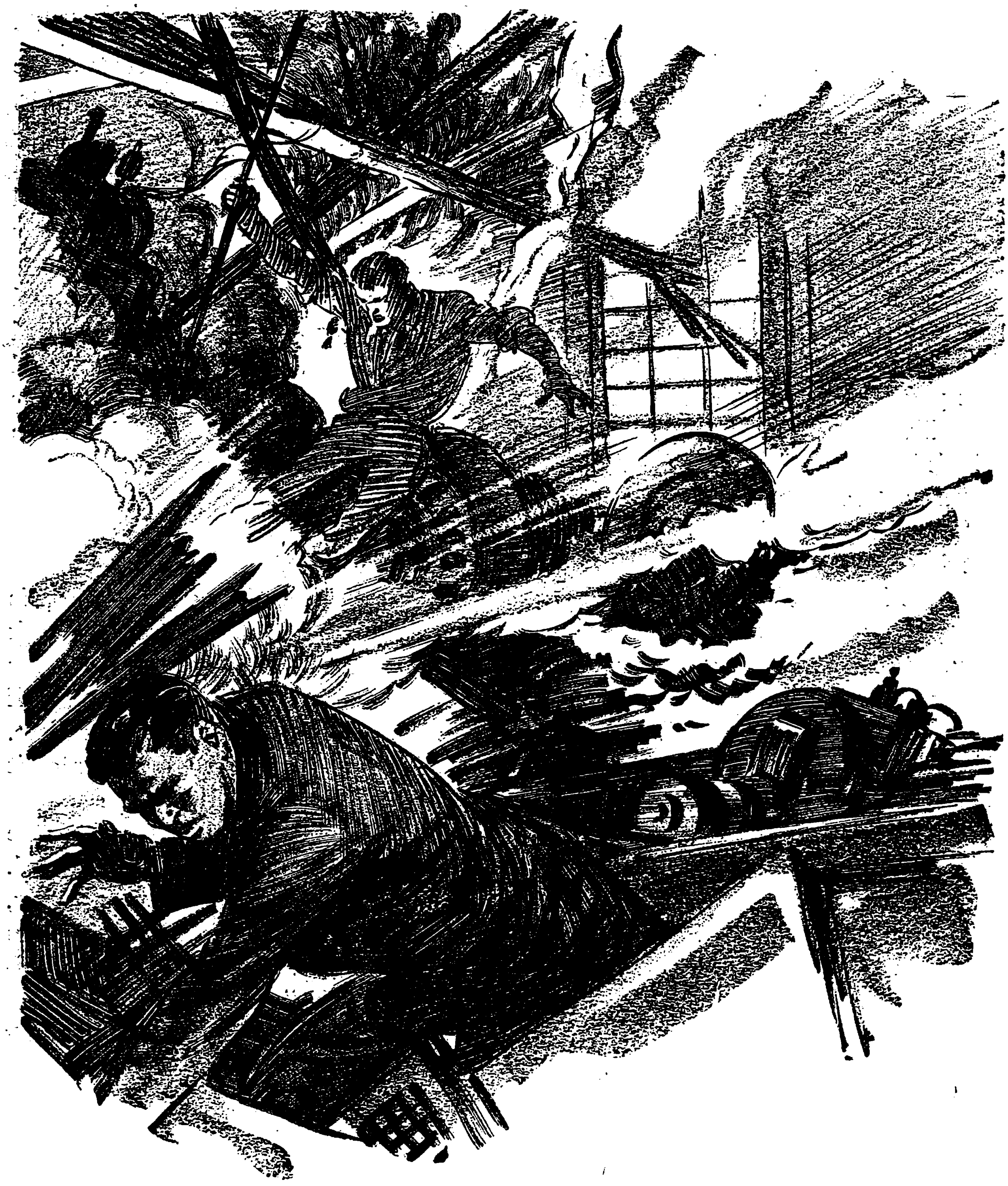
"Will you be here long, Mr. Gorman," the clerk asked. Rocky, armed with her brief case, was at his elbow.

"Just long enough to make a couple of phone calls," he said. "Hold the bill till you hear from me."

The clerk didn't bat an eye, being accustomed to the eccentricities of Cash Gorman, but Rocky blushed and looked around her at the lobby; several men nearby stared at her. Cash wheeled and marched into the elevator across the lobby. The starter and the elevator boys all saluted him. He was whisked to the eleventh floor in express fashion and guided to his suit in the corner.

"Lock that door," he directed Rocky, as he fell into a chair beside the telephone. "Freshen yourself up; and, boy, have transportation get a seat for Miss Rockwell on the first plane to Detroit and a charter waiting for her there. She'll direct the charter. It's to meet the plane on which she lands."

"Yes, sir," replied the boy.



There was a second thunderous crash from the floor below and the shriek of tortured metal, over which a hideous scream rang.

"And, boy, don't call on this phone, it'll be busy," said Cash. "Come back with the ticket. Charge it to me."

"Yes, sir," said the boy and dashed out.

"The adventurer in his own bailiwick," offered Rocky.

"It gets very serious for you from now on, Rocky," said Cash, and his demeanor sobered her. "Don't you think it is funny that a dead stock suddenly comes to life; not only to life but shows more life than Big Steel in such times as these?"

"I suppose it is," Rocky said strangely.

"It all adds up to strange things, Rocky, and I'm not trusting anybody but you," he said. "And if it'll flatter you, I wouldn't trust you, either, if you didn't have such an honest face."

"You have often misjudged women?"

"I'm always trusting women with honest faces and they have a habit of getting me into trouble. I hope, for your sake, that you are on my side. I need you, and I need Jimmy Ranger. But I know him. You're the question mark."

"You can depend on me," she said, as if she were taking an oath of allegiance. Meanwhile, Cash had put through a call to Columbia for Jimmy at the Columbia Arms.

"Hello, sleeping beauty," he said, "Listen, get this straight. I have one hundred and fifty thousand dollars credit with the Forty-third Street Bank which is guaranteed in more ways than one, one of them by Phineas T. Gardiner—"

"Stop waking me up with bedtime stories," interrupted Jimmy.

"If I had you by the throat, I'd choke you, you mullott," said Cash. "Get your pencil and paper. Here's what you do. Contact Jack Connelly by a direct visit and tell him to call me at 1101 Roosevelt, New York. Got that? All right. Put something around your skin and get hold of Cotes; and, by the way, don't tell him, or anybody, anything about my credit. Not even Holmes. That's your secret, sweetheart. But find out from Cotes where we are buying this material we need and contact the man who gets the money direct. Or, better still, get hold of Stanley in Detroit and tell him that the bank will stand behind us. New money. Tell him anything. Only don't let anybody know."

There was a buzz at the door and Rocky answered it. The bellboy stood in the doorway. "Wait a minute," said Cash. "All right, boy. What's the plane?" Cash took the ticket from him and read it. "Did you arrange for the charter."

"They'll let Miss Rockwell know aboard the flight," replied the boy.

Into the phone, Cash said: "Rocky is landing in Detroit at two thirty. Check the charter she gets out of there for Columbia and meet that charter plane if you have to kill nine guys to get there. She'll have the papers. Get news of it to the local newsboys before the market closes!" He hung up and flipped the bellboy a rolled-up bill. He departed.

"You are leaving in less than an hour, Rocky," he said. "You can sleep on the return trip. I'll meet you in Columbia tonight."

"One certainly gets around working with you, Cash, and how one can avoid calling you Cash after spending twenty-four hours with you, is a mystery," she added.

"O. K., kid," he said, "on your silver steed of the skies. The car will be at the door in five minutes."

Rocky had freshened herself and she

looked a hundred per cent better than when she had entered the room. She was picking up her belongings when the phone rang. Cash stayed her with his hand as he picked up the receiver.

"Yes," he said. "Yes, Jack. What do you know?"

"Nothing much," said Connelly at the other end of the wire, "except that there's a guy named Noller who only wants you out of business. Can't put a line on Holmes as yet. But there's a couple of strange entrants hereabouts. Any ideas?"

"Yes, have you?" asked Cash.

"Looks like some friends of ours from across the seas would either like to see this plant going hell bent to elections for them, or hell bent to nothing at all for Uncle Sam," said Connelly.

There was a note of something Cash had not figured on there. He couldn't figure the notion that somebody wanted him to be producing. He thought they were only interested in stopping the Columbia plant.

"I puzzle you, comrade," offered Connelly sarcastically.

"Russia?" asked Cash incredulously.

"That's it, partner," said Connelly. "And you better get home to papa, because there's going to be a bomb or two heaved before the sun sets again."

"O. K., Jack," he said. "I'll be there as soon as I can." He hung up.

"Rocky," he said, "if anybody has guessed, and my guess is they have, why I've come to New York, and what I've done, they'll be after the papers you are carrying back to Columbia. Now, get this straight. If anything, anything at all, funny happens, I want you to destroy that paper which Gardiner signed."

"I'm at your service, comrade," said Rocky. She feigned a salute and marched out the door.

CHAPTER X.

A PAPER WORTH A MILLION.

CASH taxied downtown to G-man Walker's office. He was waiting for the government agent when the FBI man entered the room. Briefly, Cash told him what had gone on and what were his own suspicions, claiming those of Connelly for his own.

"We figure that one of the Axis powers, which we do not know, has been working with the Grotam Exporters Corp., which does a lot of foreign buying and is probably controlled by the Soviet. But somewhere, somebody got his signals crossed and that caused the death of Coyne, which is decidedly not in Grotam's line. Who Henry is, I do not know. But we have an idea. And we know he, or his men, are working around Detroit. We'll have Columbia covered like a blanket by noon today."

"Well, it hasn't exactly been overlooked," said Cash.

"I know," said Walker, "but three more of us are flying out today. We look for action there."

"I thought so," said Cash. "I'm catching the noon plane. I'll see you on it."

"Afraid not," said Walker. Cash took the hint. He was satisfied in his mind that the jig was going to get very rough from here in. Persons who are fooling, do not go around killing investment brokers in New York and ruining lives and machinery far away in the Middle West. They want to put over an idea of some sort.

"I'm satisfied of one thing," said Cash, "and that is that neither Holmes, he's our general manager, nor Noller, our competitor, is mixed up in this thing."

"Don't be too certain of anybody, not even yourself," said Walker. "There is a person in your set-up somewhere who is betraying important information. And we'll have to trap him. I have a suggestion about that which I'll tell you about tomorrow. I want you to test out some of your best men."

"I'm certain of Ranger," said Cash, "and Miss Rockwell. I simply had to trust her because she is familiar with the financial set-up, much more so than I could be in ten years. In my business you can understand that that is important."

"I'm certain she is all right. Who else knows what you are doing; and who are you keeping things from?"

"Well," said Cash, "Fred Cotes, our plant superintendent, knows what we are doing; so does Gordon Stanley, our agent in Detroit, who is executing our contracts. So does Kirby Stowe. I told you about him. And that's all."

"What of Holmes?"

"I was afraid he would try to stop me because it is my guess that he is too anxious for bankruptcy for his own selfish interests; therefore, I've told him nothing of the new plan."

"Fine," said Walker. "I'll have something for you to do when next I see you. Get back there and get things humming. If there's a lot of activity, it'll flush out the birds."

Cash taxied to the airport and boarded his plane almost at once. He stepped from one to the other at Detroit and, before dark, he was back at Columbia. Mullins, the taxi driver, was waiting for him.

"Take me to the factory," said Cash. Mullins slid his car into speed and drove directly to the factory. Jimmy Ranger was waiting for him.

"Everything all right, James?" he asked.

"Almost," said Jimmy. "Gee, boss, that Holmes guy is a screwy customer. He finds out what's going on and he raises hell and then wants to know who is guaranteeing the payment, and I tell him you are and he busts out laughing, and he calls Maumee—we're getting the new parts from 'em, too—and tells him the company is not responsible."

Holmes stood in the doorway to Rocky's office. "And," he put in, "that's exactly what I mean, Gorman. Who executed this contract with Higgins?"

"What contract with Higgins?" asked Cash. He was fishing.

"Cotes told me," said Holmes.

"Who gave you the right to cancel an order that I had placed?" said Cash.

"You have no authority here to place such orders," said Holmes. "And we can't pay for them until—"

"Until you see a guarantee?" asked Cash. "Well, you won't see it. You're through, Holmes. Show your ugly face in here again and I'll turn you over to the FBI."

"Stop your cops and robbers, Gorman; and get out while the getting is good. You'll get hurt."

"Get me Martin Rossi on the phone, Jimmy," said Cash. "Now look, Holmes, I've tried to play nice. From now on, no holds are barred. You have shown me your hand and I don't like it; so pick it up and get out."

"The board of directors, which incidentally, I control," said Holmes, "will have to tell me that. Meanwhile, there will be no new machinery."

Jimmy handed him the phone.

"Martin," said Cash, "that deal go through?"

"No, it didn't," replied Rossi, "and how the hell do you think I'd be guaranteeing your wildcatting for one hundred and fifty thousand dollars; you have about seventy thousand dollars in questionable securities with me against twice as much as they are worth and you'll not get another cent. What are you up to?"

Holmes remained in the doorway.

"That's fine," said Cash, "because we have some wonderful defense contracts. Yes, Gardiner is in it with me, and we won't possibly need the entire one hundred and fifty thousand dollars. With that much cash we are certain to be able to get rolling. Thanks, Martin, and you won't regret it. He hung up the phone. "I hope," he said to Jimmy, "that you canceled Mr. Holmes cancellation?"

"The guy's name is Mensor in Maumee, cancel it yourself. I'm tired of talking to the guy. He's waiting for you to call at the Maumee City Club."

Before Cash could direct him, Jimmy was placing the call.

"Several things will happen here in the next week or so, Holmes, which will make or break you," said Cash. "There are several teams in the league, and I'm telling you right now that I'm captain of the winning team. So get on my side. For the present, will you leave me? I have business to attend to!" He rose and walked over toward Holmes, who backed through Rocky's office as Cash closed the door on him.

Cash took the telephone from Jimmy and began to talk to Mensor like a big businessman.

"Mensor," he said, "there's no time to lose. Telephone Gardiner in New York, or the Forty-third Street bank. They'll tell you that you'll get paid."

"It's after hours," replied Mensor.

"It is here, too," said Cash, "but there are things we need which you can get out tonight. And I assure you I personally am liable for full payment. And if that isn't enough, I have a signed power of attorney to act for Phineas T. Gardiner. After all, you do not have P. T. Gardiner going on the back of your check every day, Mr. Mensor. Ship us tonight whatever you can and rush that other stuff through."

"All right," said Mensor, "I'll ship the light stuff we have ready. But I'll have to have that power of attorney here to satisfy my company before we can ship the big stuff."

"When must you ship the big stuff; or, rather, when can you?"

"I can ship everything within six days," said Mensor.

"Between now and then either Mr.

"THE PARTY FAVORITE"
TOPS 'EM ALL!
Pepsi-Cola
REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.
5¢
BIGGER BETTER
"ACE THIRST-BUSTER"

Ranger, my assistant, or I myself will be down to Maumee," said Cash.

"Couldn't you get me a photostat of it down here in the morning before we go to work?"

"Certainly," said Cash, "if I can find such a craftsman in Columbia you'll find a photostat at your place in the morning."

"Fine."

Cash hung up the phone. He turned to Jimmy and said, "Where's Rocky? Did you meet her?"

"I don't know," said Jimmy. "I checked the charter flight, but it never came in. I thought she would be with you."

"What?" screamed Cash.

At that moment Dell Holmes burst through the office from Rocky's room.

"Oh, Mr. Gorman," she said, "you simply must come over to the bazaar! Mal is coming now, and it'll only take a few minutes of your time. It's for a good cause. I'm sorry—I've broken in on an important conference."

"Mrs. Holmes," said Cash, "is Miss Rockwell interested in this bazaar?"

"Is she?" asked Dell. "She's the head of the games committee, and she's been there most of the afternoon fleecing people."

"Let's go," said Cash. He and Jimmy followed Dell and Mal Holmes through the offices to the yard, where Dell's car was parked. They drove to the Columbia Arms, where the charity bazaar was in full progress in the grand ballroom. Rocky was the first person Cash sighted.

Cash edged over to her. He seemed interested in all of the games of chance, the booths, the hawkers, and the crowd. Rocky got to his side.

"Right this way, Cash Gorman," she said sweetly, "let's see you try your luck on this swindle," and she steered him toward a contest which looked like a cross between faro bank and roulette, and he bought a handful of chances and the game started. The caller started to yell out numbers.

"How did you get here?" asked Cash.

"There was a suspicious man on the plane," said Rocky.

"So you gave him the slip by not flying?"

"Right, Mr. Sherlock."

"What next?"

"I contacted Stanley and he drove me here. He's here now, having a hell of a time for himself."

"What did you do with the power of attorney?"

"What do you think?"

"Don't tell me you burned it?"

"It's in the Woman's National Bank of America, and there it will stay until I can get to the powder room."

"Get there as soon as you can, and when you come back, slip it to me easy."

"Yes, my master," she said. "Shall I go now?"

"No," replied Cash. "Jimmy and I will idle around and I'll find Stanley. When you see me with him, slide into the ladies' room and take that slip of paper out of the vault."

"Please, Mr. Gorman," said Rocky. She melted into the crowd. Cash idled around and finally came upon Gordon Stanley, who immediately steered him into the cocktail lounge. Rocky caught Cash's eye as he was leaving the room, and she went immediately into the ladies' room. Cash and Stanley went into the cocktail lounge, where the Detroit manufacturers' agent ordered a drink and Cash called for buttermilk. He saw Jack Connelly sitting at a table in the corner but didn't even exchange glances with him. The bartender set the drinks before Cash and Stanley, and then something happened. The hotel was plunged into darkness.

"Jack!" cried Cash.

"Yes, Cash!" cried Connelly over the din.

"Into the ladies' room," yelled Cash. "There's action there."

Cash started to edge his way through the crowd toward the door. He found the going tough. Soon he felt he was through the door into the lobby, and he thought he saw a reflection from the street which would guide him to the ladies' room. He started to run across the lobby and a foot tripped him. He spilled across the floor, skidding on his face. He was stunned. When his head cleared, the lights were on. He climbed to his feet and tried to distinguish somebody standing approximately where he was certain he had been tripped. There was nothing more harmful there than a potted palm. He climbed to his feet and went toward the ladies' room. Women were rushing out of it as if they were jumping from the sides of a sinking ship. Finally Cash could elbow his way into the parlor. There sat Rocky, with Connelly holding her upright on a chair. Her dress was off and spread along the floor. A maid was trying to get her fastened behind.

"Rocky, are you all right?" demanded Cash.

"I'm a little stunned and awful drafty," said Rocky, regaining her humor. "They didn't get it, Cash." She handed him the paper.

"Get dressed, old girl," said Cash. "I'll take you home. Thanks a million." He withdrew his wallet and slid the paper into a compartment and put it back in his pocket.

"What's the score?" yelled Jimmy Ranger, rushing into the ladies' room as if it were a public highway.

"Rocky just tossed the enemy for a five-yard loss," said Cash. He handed the wallet to Jimmy. "Put this in the hotel safe," he said. "And carry it to the deck and into the safe right out in the open so you can see whoever makes a grab for it."

Women were fussing around, hemming and hawing.

"What's it got in it, Cash?" asked Jimmy.

"Plenty, James. It has a paper worth a million dollars, and somebody is getting very rough trying to get their hands on it," said Cash. The women began to swoon.

CHAPTER XI.

CLEAN SHIRTS FOR COLUMBIA.

CASH pulled a conference of his trusted coworkers in his suite at the Columbia Arms.

"This," he said to Rocky, "is Jack Connelly, an aid of mine who has been snooping around. You can thank him for saving you—"

"Everything but embarrassment," volunteered Rocky.

"In times like these privacy is something that is very unsacred," said Jimmy.

"The important thing is this," said Cash. "Whoever wants that paper believes I can be stopped financially. That points to Holmes, to me. Maybe I'm wrong. But their course, whoever it is, is clear. Therefore the next move is to stop the delivery of those parts coming from Maumee. Those which will be here in the morning. Jimmy, we hold you accountable for the deliverance of those parts to the plant. Moreover, whoever is on the other side will try to stop those parts from starting to Columbia. I want you, Jack, to start at once for Maumee and call me here when you get there. In the meanwhile, I'll get hold of Mensor by telephone. First we must get this paper photostated. Is there such an animal here in Columbia, Rocky?"

"There is; but I hardly think you'll get it done at this hour," she replied.

"Then, Jack, you'll have to risk your neck and carry it with you," said Cash as Connelly reached for the telephone. He directed two of his men who were waiting for him in his room to meet him in the lobby. "Get the slip out of the safe and we're off."

"Wait a minute," said Jimmy, "how many men have you got here? If I'm going to get my head smashed I want somebody around who knows me."

"I'll be with you, James," said Cash.

"That's comforting," said Jimmy.

"In the meantime, let's get that paper, and furthermore, I have a theory about that accident. Let's check it now," said Cash.

He took the gathering to the lobby and claimed the paper from the clerk and turned it over to Connelly. Connelly signaled his men and they left the hotel. Cash, Rocky and Jimmy went out of the hotel to Mullins' car, waiting at the curb.

"Drop us at the factory," said Cash.

They got out of the car at the office entrance gate and let themselves into the yard. "No lights on," said Cash. "I have a flashlight." They walked silently across the court to the office door, and Cash let them in with a key. The three of them walked into the main office and crossed it by the light of the moon that shone in through the tall windows. Cash stopped in his office, and with the aid of the flashlight lighted the way of the others.

"Nobody would suspect you of being here at this hour, Rocky, and I want you to do something, if you have the nerve," he said.

"I have nerve now for anything," she said. "Either that, or for some reason I'm scared to senselessness."

"If you hear anything at all, just keep track of it," said Cash. "And if you hear a scuffle, or a lot of running or screaming or noise of any kind, turn that burglar alarm."

"I hope it works," she said.

"If it doesn't," said Cash, "duck. For we are going to be visited by somebody. I can feel it in my bones."

"What's the score?" asked Jimmy.

"James," said Cash, "there'll be an answer to that in a very short time."

The two men left Rocky seated behind the door in her office and started through the rear of the corridor for the stairway that led to the second floor of the factory, where the fallen machinery had hung. Once they got to the second floor, Cash flashed the light on to make certain of his surroundings, and then sprang with agility toward the closed stair to the upper floor from which the machinery had fallen. They reached the side of the pit through the floor, and Cash flashed on his light and looked at his watch.

"Fifty minutes to go," he said. "I hope our friends return."

"Why should they?" asked Jimmy.

"See that," said Cash, turning his light on the ruptured eaves of the floor. He focused the light on a small round hole visible in the jagged edge of the wood.

"What's that?"

"That's a piece of dowel wood," said Cash. "And whoever put it there poured the acid through it."

"So what?"

"Whoever did it," said Cash, "did it

before the base of that machinery was laid. In other words, it was done well before the machinery arrived."

Somewhere a squeak sounded through the building. Cash doused the light. He led Jimmy in the darkness to the lavatory where Kirby Stowe had secreted himself at the time of the catastrophe. Cash and Jimmy waited.

It was hours, or so it seemed, waiting for the intruder, or intruders, to reach the third floor. Cash was not certain that he could peer through the door of the small room without being detected, but he had to take the chance. The door looked directly down the staircase. He grasped the hasp in his hand and opened the door on a hairline, with Jimmy flattening himself against the wall behind him.

"Don't move," hissed Cash. A light beam scraped the ceiling through the crack in the door. Cash didn't move the door at all. He couldn't see who was behind the light, nor how many. There was no noise. Just a light stealthily coming up the stairs. It glided by the door without a sound. Neither man moved, waiting to see if there was somebody following the light. Apparently there wasn't—at least Cash couldn't see. He opened the door and saw a figure holding a light and another he was unable to distinguish fidgeting around the edge of the hole. He thought, "What a swell place to toss a guy to his just desserts."

"Go downstairs and flash that light upward through the hole when you hear me," said Cash. Jimmy took the light and stole down the stairs with only one squeak. It was enough to make the light at the hole be doused. Cash was in the little room and couldn't be detected. He watched through the crack at the back of the door and stole out of it again when the light was flashed on. He edged over toward the hole to within a few feet of the man with the light. He was certain that he could get his answer without the aid of the G-men, for it would be ten minutes yet before Mullins would become worried.

"Are you looking for something?" Cash yelled in a loud voice.

Jimmy's light pierced the hole from below, and Cash got a flash at the face of the man bending over the hole. There was a shot, then two shots, and Cash heard the scream of the burglar alarm. Then everything went black. He was tapped on the head from behind.

IT was several minutes later when Cash came to his senses, sitting in his office with Rocky applying cold towels to the back of his head.

"Didn't you see any of them?" Walker was demanding of Jimmy.

"Mr. Walker, when those shots began to drop around my ears, all I could do was fall on my face and creep for the wall," said Jimmy. "I did a little praying, too. I was certain they'd winged my brave boss with that one. Why they didn't, I don't know."

"Obviously," said Walker, "only one of them, if there was more than two, had a gun. Or at least had it where he could use it. They were not figuring upon being surprised. You, Miss Rockwell; didn't you hear or see anybody come back through this corridor?"

"When I heard the shot and the scream I ran over and turned on the alarm," she said. "Then I followed Mr. Gorman's directions and sat behind the door of my office. I guess Mr. Gorman felt I might see anybody who came down if they did, for when I turned on the alarm all the lights downstairs went up."

"But you said nobody came," Walker said.

"That's right," she said. "I waited several minutes and nothing happened. There wasn't a sound. I couldn't contain myself any longer."

"Don't tell me," said Cash, "that you went into the factory before the police arrived and without anything resembling a gun?"

"Well," she said, "I didn't get very far when Fred Cotes came running down the corridor from the main entrance and we went up together. First we found Jimmy searching around the second floor for the prowlers; and then we all went upstairs and found you knocked out, with a lump on the back of your head."

"My calculations were wrong," said Cash. "I figured there'd be only two men. But there were three. The third bird tapped me on the back of the head. For amateur saboteurs, they work smoothly. Did they get the piece of dowel wood, Walker?"

"Yes," said the FBI man, "it's gone. But that's all right. There are other methods of hanging a bird besides direct evidence. These fellows are so scared now they'll make more mistakes."

"I'd like to go to the hotel and sleep," said Cash.

He was taken to his hotel by Walker and Jimmy, and the rest of the party dispersed.

Jimmy Ranger went into his room, and Cash telephoned to Mensor and held a long conversation with him. In the early hours of the morning, Connelly telephoned from Maumee, and Cash gave him some orders. Then he rolled over and went to sleep. When he awoke, the sun was pouring through his room. He leaped from his bed and rushed to Jimmy's room. His bed was empty. Cash hustled into his clothes, telephoned Walker, and together they hurried to the sidewalk, where Mullins was waiting.

"To the factory," said Cash. At the factory, Cash leaped from Mullins' car and into the seat of Fred Cotes' car, the high-powered, heavy machine which had taken him to Detroit.

Before Cotes' chauffeur could get out of the door, Cash had started the motor and was backing the car out of the yard. Just as the chauffeur was about to catch up to Cash, Mullins backed his hack around in front of the man and Cash swung out of the yard and opened the throttle.

"This is not grand larceny on government business, is it?" he asked.

"Not if what you say is right," replied the G-man.

"If we find that truck in the ditch by the freight yard, which I'm certain we shall," said Cash, "we might have an answer to the murders and sabotage, too, before Jack reaches Columbia."

Cash tooled the car around the side streets to the vicinity of the railroad. He then drove along the main highway slowly. They were almost to the turn that led to the freight yard when a huge bus passed them. A quarter of a mile ahead, the truck was turning from the freight-yard road to the main highway. Cash slowed down and prepared to turn around, ready to follow the truck back to town. Then it happened. The bus swung across the road and drove the truck to the edge. It bumped the rear end, and before the driver could pull out of it the back tumbled down the deep embankment across the road's shoulder and landed upside down in the ditch.

Cash wheeled the car around and started after the bus. The FBI man took a gun from the shoulder holster. Cash had the car ripping along the road at nearly ninety miles an hour by the time he had it into high speed. But the bus, which had the advantage of some mileage in addition to full speed ahead when Cash got the car turned around, was disappearing down the road. He pressed his foot to the floor. Without regard for the overturned truck, Cash and Walker sped on. When they reached a wide-sweeping turn in the road, they peered down it to see the bus disappearing in the narrowing piece of a straight hill which came to a point at the horizon. Cash shoved his foot to the floor board. "You'll never get the thing. It's got wings," said Walker. But he was wrong. Cash's driving seemed to improve, or the car seemed to get faster, for suddenly, around the next turn, they were overtaking the bus at a tremendous rate. In a few minutes they were on it. Cash crossed in front and Walker leveled his gun at the driver. The bus stopped and Walker climbed out. Cash bounded from his seat. They met at the rear of the car. Then Walker stopped.

"This is not the bus," said Walker. Instead of the high, rear-drive, high-tanklike affair, this was an old bus with a front drive and hood, with children swarming up around the driver. The driver climbed out. He rushed up to Cash and Walker.

"We're government men," said Walker. He put his gun back in its holster. "Did a big bus pass you."

"No. Nothing has passed me for twenty minutes, We were ambling along because I'm ahead of time and the kids raise hell if they get to school early."

"O. K., driver," said Walker. "Forget it." Then he turned to Cash, "Let's get back. They're not only clever, they're lucky. They turned into a clump of trees somewhere as soon as they spotted that bus, figuring we'd chase it, as we did."

"Look," said Cash, pointing to the sky in the opposite direction. A plane was speeding across the sky to the west, gaining altitude in a straight line. "We might find the bus," Walker said, "but I doubt it. Certainly we won't find anybody in it." They started back for the overturned truck. When they reached it, police and wreckers were pulling it over the ditch. Jimmy Ranger was standing around, almost crying.

"Next time James," Cash said, "don't try to get away without me."

Fred Cotes climbed out of the ditch. "That's that," he said. "We've lost another day."

"Well," replied Cash, "at least we didn't lose any more life. Jimmy, a big front-drive bus didn't come back by this wreck did it?"

"Haven't seen any," said Ranger.

"Good," replied Cash, "and by the way, Fred, I stole your car because I was looking for something like this. We spotted the accident, but we were tricked out of catching the criminals."

"I see you had my car," Fred said, nodding over his shoulder to the car. "Well, we'll just have to wait until we can get some more of that stuff from Maumee."

"Might as well get back to the factory," said Cash. "Want to drive us back?" He started around the rear of Cotes' car, pressing himself against it to let two laundry trucks pass on the road to Columbia. Cash slid into the front seat, with Walker beside him. Jimmy and Cotes got in the rear. Cash started the car and fell in behind the trucks. He didn't make an effort to pass them.

"No use hurrying now," he said, "the damage has been done."

They reached Columbia Street and turned down, still behind the trucks. The trucks went down the street to the yard entrance of the Columbia plant and pulled into the main yard. Cash followed them and got out. Walker was out of the car in a flash. From the trucks jumped two Connelly men, and from the first one leaped Jack Connelly.

"Without incident, my captain," said Connelly.

"May I ask what this is?" Cotes said.

"I suspect my boss is up on his toes this morning," said Ranger. "If you look inside those laundry trucks, I'll bet you find duplicates of everything that was wrecked in that ditch this morning."

"And don't lay odds against it," said Connelly. "We've been driving like hell all night, and if we've got clean shirts instead of what I think we have, I'll be very angry."

"Now if we can only find out who is tossing all these bombs, we might get somewhere," said Jimmy.

"I'm satisfied on one group," said Cash. "But who belongs to the third, I'll never know. At least I don't think I will."

"Well," said Cotes, "while you're playing miracle man, I suppose the least I can do is get to work and start this retooling right away."

"Yes," said Cash, "I would if I were you."

CHAPTER XII.

MR. RIGAMOROFF ENTERS.

BUT Cash was wrong in assuming he would not learn the identity of the missing group. He was trying to find the answer to some financial and manufacturing questions when Rocky entered his office with a gentleman who represented himself as Mr. Rigamoroff: "I'm from the Grotam Exporting Corp., Mr. Gorman, and there is something I must see you about!"

Cash was puzzled. "Of course," he said. "I'm tied up at the moment, but Miss Rockwell can take care of it." He got up from his desk and waved Rigamoroff to a seat. Then he went into Rocky's office. "Call Jimmy. Tell him we've flushed a bird. Tell Walker I'll hold him until he gets here." In a matter of seconds he was back.

"What can I do for you, Mr. Riga-" —he glanced at the man's card—"moroff?" he concluded.

"I'll come directly to the point," said Rigamoroff in a slight Russian accent. "I understand you are preparing to go into high-speed production. We can use your production. We'll pay a one-dollar premium."

"That's a mighty attractive offer, Mr. Rigamoroff," said Cash.

"We realize that," said Rigamoroff. "But we are anxious, and I imagine a company in your present condition is anxious, too—and we have the money."

"Where will you use this material?" asked Cash.

"In our homeland," said Rigamoroff evenly.

"I hardly think you'll get permits."

"I think there will be no trouble with that," said Rigamoroff. "We have but recently got material which even you are having trouble getting."

"You mean machinery for retooling?"

"Exactly!"

"Might I ask how you know?"

"There are many factions interested

in your output, Mr. Gorman," said the Russian. "We are but one. But I venture to say each knows what the other is doing."

"Perhaps you can explain a couple of murders in connection with it?"

"That," said Rigamoroff, "is not conducive to the type of relations we are anxious to set up. Murder is not in our line. We have money, an attractive item to a company on the verge of bankruptcy."

"You mean that you know nothing of these murders?"

"Save that they have been committed and we do not approve," he replied. "And before there is an effort to link such strong-arm methods to my homeland, I am coming out in the open and asking you for your business."

Walker had been standing in the doorway through most of this conversation. He'd stood behind Rocky's door until Cash had Rigamoroff well into the subject. Now he dropped back and gave Cash the eye to continue. Rigamoroff didn't look behind him nor take his eyes from Cash.

"I do not believe, Mr. Gorman," he said, "that I will give you a clue to your troubles. Whoever is responsible does not represent me, or anything I represent. You are free to tell that to anyone—even the gentlemen from the government who are interested in your problems. All our contracts are open and aboveboard. If you want to do business with us, you will find us registered, as you probably know—"

"With the state department," said Cash, "and I'll tell you right now, Mr.

HERE'S A BREATH-TAKING VALUE

You can sweeten your breath fifty times or more with one five-cent package of Sen-Sen, the tastiest, handiest breath sweetener of them all.

Yes, Sen-Sen is really a bargain, but it does the job quickly and thoroughly. Bad breath due to onions, liquor, smoking, tooth decay, or any other cause, Sen-Sen sweetens swiftly and pleasantly.

Get Sen-Sen today. In five and ten cent packages. You'll delight in its delicious oriental flavor.

SEN-SEN FOR THE BREATH 5¢ THROAT EASE VALUABLE TO SINGERS AND SPEAKERS

DON'T OFFEND...USE SEN-SEN

Rigamoroff, that perhaps we'll get together on some matters."

"Shall I present contracts?" the other asked.

"As soon as we are ready to operate," said Cash.

"Very good. Good day, Mr. Gorman." He picked up his hat and gloves. "And by the way, as soon as you see Mr. Walker, which will be very soon, tell him for me we have no other connections than those of which I have told you." He departed.

"He's an oily sucker with eyes in the back of his head," said Walker. "What do you think of him?"

"I've seen guys like him before," said Cash. "They come out in the open to toss you off the track."

"You're wrong, Cash," said Walker. "You can forget him. His agents, and the Soviet agents who work through him, will have nothing more violent to toss at you than some propaganda and perhaps some strikes. He and his pals have broken with the Axis powers over the violence. That visit was just his way of telling me that. He's not interested in you or your output or your plant. They have an operation ahead somewhere else, and he wants me to know that it will be clean and aboveboard."

"I hope," said Cash.

"You can depend upon it," said Walker.

"If he does interest his pals in a strike, I hope it doesn't come soon," said Cash. Jack Connelly, now known to Walker, came into Cash's office.

"Mensor wants this paper countersigned by either Holmes or some responsible officers of the company," he said, returning Gardiner's power of attorney.

"How do you like that?" said Cash to Walker. "This outfit gets Phineas T. Gardiner on the dotted line and it wants in addition to him a half-baked goose who's interested only in bankruptcy. We'll get Kirby Stowe on it. Miss Rockwell," Cash called toward the next office. Rocky came through the door. "Locate Kirby Stone, will you?"

"Right away," said Rocky, "and there's a call on your phone from Detroit."

Cash lifted the receiver. It was Gordon Stanley. He was calling from Detroit, to which he had returned.

"I forgot to tell you the big thing last night," he said. "Higgins must have deliveries beginning in three weeks."

"He'll have them," said Cash. "O. K." He put down the phone. "Get Fred Cotes, too, Miss Rockwell." Cotes came in a few minutes. "How long will it take you to get that line in operation?"

"If we commence to get stuff from Maumee without further incident we can have the line going in twenty days; twenty-five at the most."

"That line has got to have stuff going into Detroit exactly twenty-one days from today. What do you need to do it?" asked Cash.

"Men."

"Get them, wherever you have to go," said Cash.

"O. K., Cash," Cotes replied.

He departed, and Jimmy Ranger came into the office. "Well, James," said Cash, "what's the answer?"

"If we can get the stuff from Mensor, you ought to be working at full speed in ten days," said Jimmy. "If you can truck the required stuff in here overnight, provided Mensor has it, and I don't see why they shouldn't, you ought to be going in forty-eight hours."

Walker looked from Cash to Jimmy Ranger.

"Perhaps," said Cash, "I should explain. Mr. Ranger, my assistant, started life as an engineer. A mechanical engineer. I've had him studying that main line, its performance, and what they are trying to do with it. You have had his report as quickly as I have had it."

"That's right, Mr. Walker," said Jimmy. "I was surprised myself when Cash told me that Cotes was not on our side. But playing on Cash's team, you always find strange fellows on the other side. Now we've got to watch even our own players."

"I do not think so," said Cash.

"Why?" asked Jimmy.

"Fred knows that I know, and he'll do everything he can to stall along for the full time he has allotted, but he won't do any more to stop production," said Cash. "He's satisfied that I have fallen for his line."

"James," he went on after a few minutes, "you may be right. He's thinking, Walker, what a sucker I am."

"I'm thinking the same thing," said Walker.

"Well, let's force the gentleman's hand and see what takes place, Jimmy, do you know what men should be employed to speed up the work?"

"Sure. Mechanics and toolmakers," replied Jimmy.

"Where can you get them; here?"

"Detroit," said Jimmy. "But while you were in New York the other day, Cotes took on a lot of 'trusted men,' and they've been lining up the job."

"I just told him to get more," said Cash, "which he will likely not do; therefore you get yourself to Detroit, or Flint, and get back here as soon as you can with a full crew to do the job yourself."

"I can't go whisking around the country on my looks," said Ranger, "good as they are." Cash reached into his pocket and withdrew a roll of bills. "That's the bank roll until Gardiner gets here, which will be in the morning, if I guess correctly."

"Why?" asked Walker.

"Our Russian friend no doubt paid him a call," said Cash, "before he flew out here. Phineas will believe everything is all right, and he will be out to protect his investment. Which he will do, only he doesn't know quite how. Rocky," he yelled, "any luck with Kirby Stowe?"

She came into Cash's room. "Don't seem to be able to locate him," she said. "I've tried everywhere."

"Get on your horse and find him," said Cash, "and bring him to me, wherever I am. The hotel will know."

"Right," she said.

Mal Holmes walked into Cash's office. "I've wanted to see you," said Cash. "This is Mr. Walker, of the FBI. He's interested in murder. Anything you can do to enlighten him? He seems to think there's a reason for it that smacks of sabotage. I've tried to tell him," he went on, "that your only interest was financial sabotage, and that in reality you weren't interested in crippling the plant."

Holmes had recovered from his first concern. "If Mr. Walker has been watching this plant and its operations," said Holmes, "he might be interested to know that there never has been any trouble, not even labor trouble, until you and your New York financial friends got into the picture. As far as I'm concerned with the accident, I know nothing about it. No more than the watchman in the yard. I do know that just before the material arrived you were gravely concerned with it. You were even interested enough to want to see the insurance policy. You, I understand, were the first person to announce that the company was not responsible because the policy covering it was operative until the new unit was declared in operation by a Maumee man. Furthermore, it is my understanding that you managed to be on the floor with the unit when it cracked through the floor, and not here, where it might have fallen!"

Everything which Holmes said was true. Cash knew it was all correct. He knew that Walker had perhaps known it was true by this time. But, stated coldly and without adornment, it sounded badly for him.

"If you are interested in real sabotage," said Holmes, "you might look into this man's record. And then compare it with mine."

"Thank you for the tip," said Walker. "I think I shall. And now I must be going. I hope I can trust you to remain in town." He said the last to Cash with an air of sternness about him.

"Your inning," said Cash to Holmes. Holmes simply smiled and walked back to his office.

He was struck with a sudden thought, and he grabbed his hat and fled from the building. Outside, Walker fell in beside him. Mullins was waiting in a car at the curb outside the yard. They got into the car.

"I see you got the point; a little late, but you got it," said Walker.

"He could certainly sell a bill of goods against me on the circumstantial evidence," said Cash.

"But he won't do it until he gets into a jam," said Walker. "That was just a neat piece of blackmail. Furthermore, he believes he can convict you. He is just biding his time. You're about to be slugged from another direction, is my guess. So tread softly. Incidentally, somebody else heard most of that conversation."

"How do you know?" asked Cash.

"As I left the office," said Walker, "I saw the swinging door to the factory close; and I looked into his office and Holmes was seated as his desk, so it wasn't he going through that door! I think Holmes will be the next person surprised, only watch your step so you don't get it, too."

"I wish I knew half the things that are going on here," said Cash. "First a Russian comes in and offers to do business directly; then I discover my plant super is one of the main saboteurs, and he placates convincingly; and then the general manager puts me on a spot for a murder, and you tell me I'd better watch out or I'll be getting the same thing that Holmes will be getting! Who is going to give him anything—besides the hot foot I hope I give him?"

"He doesn't figure into the plan of our friends, and they'll have him removed neatly and deftly," said Walker. "Perhaps a business trip. But in the meanwhile, he's tucked away Kirby Stowe, and you'll have a hard job finding him. So you'd better get on your horse yourself and get the cash money, for that's what you'll need to swing your deal."

Cash left Walker and went to his room. The telephone rang and he answered it.

"Gorman?" asked a voice, a vaguely familiar voice.

"Yes," said Cash.

"You've had your warnings," it said, "now get out of this thing. Get out or stand trial for murder."

Cash knew his freedom was dependent

solely upon his ability to stay out of jail and thus have room in which to operate. He put through a call to New York for Phineas T. Gardiner. He was told that Mr. Gardiner wasn't at home. He spoke to Ivins, the butler.

"Where did he go, Ivins?" asked Cash.

"He said he'd be at Columbia tonight!" the butler replied.

CHAPTER XIII.

HIDE-OUT RAID.

CASH was waiting for the plane from Detroit when Phineas T. Gardiner alighted. He glared at Cash at first, and then he broke into one of his rare smiles.

"I see you anticipated me," said Gardiner.

"Phineas," said Cash, "this thing is desperate, and they've got me dead to rights. And if they convicted me—which they might do with a hostile jury—they've got you, too. Because I'm here protecting your money."

"What on earth are you talking about?" asked Gardiner.

Cash outlined the situation briefly. He made it plain that only a matter of cash stood between Phineas T. and his money back; or no cash and possibly a very embarrassing time with his hide. While P. T. Gardiner was about as liberal with his dollars as a Nazi agent with foreign exchange, he was not a man who enjoyed personal suffering. He would have been pleased to see Cash stew in his own juice, but he was equally anxious to see that he wasn't pushed into the juice with him.

"But what of this Grotam bid?" asked Gardiner.

"I knew that would bring you out here!" said Cash, and he laughed outright. "Well, you can put that in your book as a trail-crosser. They would take everything they could get, but they can't get it. It's like ice cream in the tropics. A great dish, only it costs you too much to make it. Nice to think about, but no chance to get it."

"Why not?" asked Phineas. "I have connections, young man."

"They won't mean a thing when this thing unravels," said Cash. "Well, is it cash on the line or are you going to take the consequences?"

Cash had worked himself into such a state of feigned anxiety that Gardiner was amused. "It's all right," said Cash, "for you to enjoy my suffering over your dough. But it won't be so pleasant when they grab you, too!"

"I think I shall have a pleasant night's sleep first," said Gardiner, "and then I shall give you my answer." By this time they had reached the hotel. Gardiner registered and led Cash to his room. Cash continued to plead, but Gardiner was evidently too overjoyed with the sight of Cash Gorman fretting about his hide to declare himself.

"Jefferson," he said, "I am going to enjoy this night's sleep more than any I've had in months. Your face is a study."

"I wouldn't be too certain of that," replied Cash. His lips compressed into a straight line. He stalked out of Gardiner's suite and went directly to his own. Since Gardiner was one floor above him, Cash decided to walk down the stairs. He came out into the corridor through a fire door and found a man opening the door to his room. Cash stopped and pressed himself against the wall. The man went right into Cash's room, and Cash dashed to the hall desk and lifted the phone. He called for Connelly's room. Connelly answered. "Walk down here," said Cash, "and edge your way through Jimmy's room into mine. There'll be some action."

Cash walked right down the hall and inserted the key into his lock and let himself in without further delay. He was astonished when he opened the door and the lights were out. He reached in and switched them on. Then he stole in, looking behind the door as he entered. There was no sign of anyone. At first he wanted to search the room. But he thought better of that. He would go about his business of preparing for bed. The intruder would have to come out sooner or later.

A few minutes later, when Connelly stole into the room from Ranger's room, Cash was deeply concerned. "Where'd he go?" he asked Jack in astonishment.

"You must be blind," said Connelly. He pointed to the window. Cash rushed to one of the windows, which was closed almost to the bottom. He lifted it up, and out in front of it was a fire escape. He looked down to the alley below, and Connelly peered from the next window, piercing the night with a flashlight beam. The bottom ladder was dangling.

"What do you suppose the guy wanted?" asked Connelly.

"Just to pay me a call," said Cash, "and leave a card. Jimmy won't be here tonight. I think I'll sleep with you just to confuse the gentleman."

He picked up his hat and coat, a small traveling kit and some pajamas. Then they went to Connelly's room. Cash outlined a plan of action to the private detective from New York and was convincing him of the wisdom of his plan when the hotel was rocked by a blast. Cash dropped the comb and brush he had been running through his hair. "My room!" he said.

He jumped into his pants and pulled a coat over his pajamas. Connelly was ahead of him down the hall. When they got to the floor on which Cash's room had been, the corridor was filled with guests running and screaming up and down the hall. By the time Jack and he edged through the crowd, firemen had arrived. The police were there. A house detective was in command and demanding to be allowed to get into the room to see if Mr. Gorman and Mr. Ranger, his assistant, had managed to remain alive.

"Don't worry about me," said Cash over the heads of the crowd, "and don't worry about Ranger. He was not in there, either."

"Where were you?" asked the detective.

"I was with a friend two floors up," replied Cash. "What happened?"

"We can't tell," said the detective, "but something exploded in there. Did you have any bombs in your room?"

"Well, really, I don't know," said Cash facetiously. "There's been so much bomb throwing, verbal and otherwise, since I've been in this town that I didn't check my belongings before I went upstairs."

"What's going on?" demanded G-man Walker, pushing through the crowd. Cash explained to him. "Let's get out of here," Walker murmured.

Connelly, Walker and Cash left and went to Phineas T. Gardiner's room. Gardiner came out of a sound sleep to let them in.

"What in Heaven's name is going on?" he demanded.

Cash explained to him.

"I'm getting out of this madhouse by the first plane in the morning," said Gardiner.

“If I were you,” said Cash, “I’d charter a plane and get out tonight.”

“I’ll take my licking and do just that.” He started for the phone.

“I wouldn’t do that,” Walker cautioned. “Sit down, Mr. Gardiner. Now tell me, Mr. Gorman, why weren’t you in your room when this explosion occurred?”

Cash explained the visit and exactly how long he’d taken to follow the visitor into the room. Walker calculated momentarily. “Did you pay a visit to your room at all during the night?” he asked. Cash explained he had gone to the place to turn in and had called Gardiner’s home, to learn that he was flying to Columbia. Then he changed his mind and went to the airport to wait for Gardiner. Walker pondered.

“Mr. Gorman,” said Walker, “we knew there would be an attempt on your life tonight because we’ve had your wire tapped and we heard the warning, and we knew they weren’t fooling, for now they are desperate. They’ve got to deliver, and the stake is large enough so that life doesn’t matter. I only wanted to check with you that you were the man who received the call.”

“It was me, all right,” said Cash. “But when did they put the firecracker under my bed?”

“The fellow that let himself into the room had the bomb,” Walker said. “He put it under the bed and ducked out the window and down the fire escape when you put the key in the door. The lights in the room threw us off the track. Instead of watching down below, our man came upstairs to tell us there were lights in the room. We were waiting for him on the roof.”

“Looks like a lot of people missed the bus,” said Connelly.

“Thank you for the helpful suggestion,” said Cash. “Walker, if we locate that bus we’ve got our men.”

“We haven’t been sleeping, Mr. Gorman,” said Walker. “When Mr. Ranger said he hadn’t seen that bus come back along the main highway, I enlisted the aid of the highway patrol and they’ve scoured the road between the place where we lost the bus and where we caught up to the school bus. And we have had the road watched night and day since The bus can only be in one place, and that house is being watched closely. We will double the guard and rush it soon.”

“My Lord,” said Gardiner, by this time fully dressed, “what is this, a

A BIG O.K. FROM U.S.A.
PEPSI-COLA
A SPARKLING BEVERAGE
REFRESHING-SATISFYING
12 OUNCES
5¢
PEPSI-COLA

Western movie thriller, or what? And why, my good man, can't I get out of here?"

"Would you mind, Mr. Walker," put in Connelly, "if I went to my room and got into some clothes? I'd like to join this party."

"Go right ahead," said Walker. Connelly departed.

"You can go anywhere you like, Mr. Gardiner," said Walker, "we are not interested in detaining you."

"But for his own good," said Cash, "don't you think he should stay here until daylight, anyway?"

"I think," said Walker, "that he should stay here until this matter is cleared up."

"Well," harumphed Gardiner, "how long will that be?"

"You can't tell," said Walker. "This last effort on Mr. Gorman's life having failed, they may lay low now and take a different course. That's my guess. I'd say we would know in a day or so."

"In the meanwhile?" asked Gardiner.

"Go about the business that brought you here," he said.

"Oh, all right," said Gardiner. The telephone rang.

Gardiner answered it and handed it to Cash. "It's for you," he said. Cash took it. It was Rocky. "I'm at the Golden Peacock, and I have found Kirby Stowe and in bad company. You better get out here. With help!"

With that she hung up. Cash didn't want Walker in on this.

"A lady friend of mine is in distress," he said. "I must go to her rescue."

"Did she find him?" asked Walker coolly.

"She did," said Cash, somewhat startled.

"Don't look around too closely when you get there," said Walker. "Just get her out and leave Stowe, if necessary. But don't ask any questions."

"Perhaps you'll tell me where I'm going," said Cash.

"To the Golden Peacock," said Walker. "It's on the main highway, about five miles from town. Just to insure you of safe conduct, we'll walk into the place five minutes after you get there. You leave when you see me."

Cash was stunned. Phineas T. looked from one to the other.

"This thing gets crazier every minute," he said. "Hotels blowing up, people threatened, G-men pulling rabbits out of the hat—and what not. What am I to do?"

"You sit tight," said Walker. Cash had helped himself to a shirt and tie of Gardiner's and he jumped into it. Connelly returned dressed and with Cash's shoes. They left together. In the lobby, Cash departed from Jack, who went on a mission for Cash. Cash got into Mullins' cab and gave him directions to go to the roadhouse.

Mullins sped down the main highway. The place was blazing with neon lights. Cash thought it was a brassy place for spies or saboteurs to be hanging out. "How long has this place been running, Mullins?" he asked.

"It's been here for years," said Mullins. "It has a new owner, though, every other month. These fellows are from Detroit, I guess. Been here about a month."

"Oh," said Cash. Mullins pulled into the driveway.

CASH went directly to the booth where Rocky sat with Kirby Stowe. Almost without delay, he whipped out his paper from Phineas T. Gardiner and handed Kirby a fountain pen. Without introduction of a new subject, Rocky told Kirby to sign it and he did. "Get him out of here," said Cash, and without Rocky realizing what he was doing, he took one of her cigarettes and folded the paper into the pack. "Get that to Mensor in the morning," he said. "I'm going to have some fun here if you can get out of here in two minutes."

"Come on, Kirby," she said, "I'm going home."

"Alone?" he asked drunkenly.

"No, you're going with me," she said. Stowe got to his feet unsteadily and walked out behind her. Cash bowed them away and called the waiter. "What's the check here?" he said. "And bring me a glass of buttermilk, I'm expecting some one to return."

All of this took place in a matter of minutes. Cash figured that Rocky and Kirby would get out of the place and be well on the way home when Walker and his party arrived. He thought he would be able to bring matters to a head. And he was certain of it when he saw a sinister-looking fellow come out of the door at the back of the room and start across it toward his booth. He was almost to Cash when somebody called to him from the foyer. He turned around and smiled and shifted his course. He went to the foyer to greet some new arrivals, and Cash knew the jig was up. Without turning, he knew the new arrivals were Walker and his men. He was greatly surprised when nobody came to his table. He was beginning to get uneasy when a voice said in his ear.

"Walk back through the crowd and through that door on the right, just as if you were going to the men's room and making a mistake," it said.

"That would be no mistake," said Cash.

"Get going," said the voice.

Cash got to his feet and marched to the rear of the room. He pushed his way through the door and was shoved in the back as soon as he got in. Then a foot reached out and tripped him. He sprawled along the floor. He got up.

"Well," he said, "seems as if we've met before!"

"No guff this time, Mr. Gorman," said the voice, and Cash knew it was Henry. He wheeled around and was surprised to find Mr. Rigamoroff standing beside Henry. "Get up that paper. And get on your horse and get out of town or we'll lay you out stiff and very cold. We won't miss the next time."

"Now, Henry," said Rigamoroff, "I protest these methods."

"You see how far you got?" said Henry. "Get up that power of attorney and get on that phone"—he pointed to an instrument on the table—"and call Mensor. Call off that contract."

"Let me get this straight," said Cash. "You want me to shut down the Columbia factory. Why?"

"I want the product," said Rigamoroff, "and if I don't get it Henry is prepared to get violent. You haven't much choice, Mr. Gorman."

"No, I haven't, have I?" said Cash.

"You have none," said Henry. "Get going."

Cash picked up the telephone. He was wondering how these agents had managed to elude the G-men. He was wondering further if Kirby and Rocky got through. Then he had a thought—a dangerous thought. He wondered if perhaps Walker had spotted Rocky and Kirby leaving the place and had decided to let him play out the string to see what would happen. Now it was up to Cash to see it through. He placed the call. That was what was up, all right. In a few minutes he had Mensor on the phone.

"There seems to be some misunderstanding, Mensor," he said.

"Not about your hours," said Mensor. "Can't you ever call anybody during the daytime."

"Under the circumstances," said Cash, "that would be difficult. The fact is that there are certain forces who want me to cancel the agreement with you. Others which want me to tell you that my agreement with Phineas T. Gardiner is all shot, but—"

Before Cash could say another word, Henry beckoned to a man at the far side of the room; a door opened, and through it walked Rocky and Kirby. They were gagged and bound by the hands. Kirby was fast being overcome by his own fumes.

"Well," said Cash, "I guess the jig is up, Mensor; those people who are against me seem to hold all the cards. Dont' bother with that next shipment."

Cash was on his mettle now. How had Walker failed to make the place? Could it be that he had come to the Golden Peacock too light and the outer guards had overpowered the G-men? But foreign agents didn't work that way. Neither did they go around the country so blatantly bombing people. He hung up the phone and looked around the room. There were five men in the room beside Kirby and himself. Three of them had the look of having dealt in murder before. He had seen one of them before. That was in the corridor of the New York hotel. He nodded to him.

"You can put away that artillery," said Cash lightly. "I never carry it, as you must know, if you know me at all."

"We know you," said Henry, "and we know you are not through. Therefore the artillery remains in evidence. You are going for a ride, my friend. And you can take your girl friend with you."

"Might I ask if it will be in a bus?"

"Very funny," said Henry. "But even with Fred Cotes' speed wagon you couldn't catch it, could you?"

Cash was now on familiar ground. He'd struck a responsive chord. He had touched Henry in a vital place, his vanity. His pride in his nefarious work. He knew he must stall for time. It was an avenue of possible escape.

"That plane trick was very clever," said Cash. "It threw me off the track."

"And that stupid G-man, too, I venture," said Rigamoroff.

"Really, Mr. Rigamoroff," said Cash, "Mr. Walker had nothing but the nicest things to say about you. You really shouldn't malign our government agents. They are not as stupid as you seem to think. Now, for example: you are putting a very pretty girl to an undue lot of terror. But that is your method, I suppose. An ounce of common sense would tell you that she is too frightened to make an outcry. Besides, I'm certain she would not if I asked her. Would you, Rocky?"

Rocky shook her head that she would do what Cash told her. "See," he said. "And as for the heir there, he's so stiff he'll fall in his tracks. But if you let him loose he'll get in my way when I go into operation. For, gentlemen," he said evenly, "if you think you are taking me for any ride out of here without a fight, you have another think coming!"

At a nod from Henry, one of the men loosened the gag on Rocky's mouth. "Oh, Cash," she said, "what are we going to do?"

"Well, Rocky," he said, "if you have a cigarette, I'll take one."

Rocky fished into her coat and withdrew the pack. Cash took one and put the pack in his pocket.

"Warm up that plane," Henry directed. "I'll take that pack of cigarettes." Cash withdrew them and handed him the pack.

"Henry," he said, "you fellows are so naïve you are funny. There's nothing in that pack which would do you the least bit of good. Because you see, the paper you are looking for is back at the Columbia Arms Hotel, safely tucked away in a vault. That thing which Kirby signed and which got you so hungry, along with my Russian friend, there, is a piece of blank hotel stationery. That was my key to this room. You see, I wanted to get into this back room. Ah, that surprises you, doesn't it?"

"Wait a minute," said Henry, "why are you doing all this talking? What's it all about?"

"Nothing much, Henry," said Cash, "except if you look into the bar of your joint here right now you'll probably see a few government agents; and if they are not there, they will be very shortly. That's all. This house has been watched closely for several days. Walker and my man Connelly have been on to every move you have made. And if you think I came here without them knowing I was here, you're crazy! As a matter of fact, I might as well have not bothered because you gave me the key to telling them I was in trouble when you allowed me to use the phone. We hadn't expected you would do that; we thought you would be clever enough to know that since I came unguarded, we at least would have the wires tapped."

Cash had hardly dropped the word "tapped" when Rigamoroff was through the doorway. "Come on, Henry," he said. "You cannot afford to be caught here any more than I can." Henry followed him through the door. The others were fast on their heels.

"This is thrilling," said Kirby, sober and wild-eyed. "What's it all about?"

"Oh, Cash," said Rocky, grasping his coat lapels, "how are we going to get out of here?"

"Honey," said Cash, "I wish I knew. I can't imagine what has kept Walker. They must have overpowered the men, though he did say they were doubling the guard here tonight."

"Then it was watched?"

"Of course," he said, "but I certainly thought they would be here by this time. Well, there is only one thing to do. Let's try to sneak out the back way and around the building to the front. Maybe Mullins' car is still there. Even if poor Mullins isn't. We'll come back for him."

They walked slowly over toward the car. There wasn't a sign of activity anywhere. The music was going inside. Cash stole a look over his shoulder and couldn't see anything at all going on in the place. Mullins was asleep in his seat. He waked up.

"Have a good time?" he asked Cash.

"Splendid, Mullins; splendid," Cash joshed. "We all just met sudden death again, and we didn't like it. Let's go home."

They got into the car, and without incident, Mullins started the motor and wheeled the car around and out of the driveway to the main highway.

"Kirby," said Cash, "I can talk my way out of anything except a woman's faint. Mullins, stop at that dog wagon there and get me a glass of water. Miss Rockwell has fainted. Overtired, no doubt."

"Yes, sir," replied Mullins.

CHAPTER XIV.

CASH MEETS A MURDERER.

IN a few minutes, Cash had revived Rocky again and Mullins was worrying his car toward the city. Rocky was really rocky. Things had happened faster for her than they ever had in her life. She knew there were things which had to be done; and done at once. But Cash was adamant.

"Drive Miss Rockwell home, first of all, Mullins," he said, "even I must have some sleep."

"But aren't you going to cancel that order you gave to Mensor?" said the girl. "You'll have to get at the plant at once so the men do not get worried."

"I'll take care of those things," he said, "and if, as I suspect, that wire really was tapped, my friend, Mr. Walker, has already taken care of things. And if he hasn't, I assure you I'm not going to waken Mr. Mensor again tonight, or he won't give me any machinery even if I pay for it in gold."

"You mean you are through for tonight?" she asked.

"I mean just that," said Cash. "We've several days left and there will be less opposition, even if I do land in jail.

"That bothers you, doesn't it?" she asked.

"Yes," Cash replied, "it does. Because, somehow or other, I feel that Henry bird was involved in at least one murder and I do not fancy taking the rap."

By this time they were at Rocky's house. "Well," said Cash, "no more tonight. We'll be looking into all the corners in the morning. Now we have some time."

"I'll get out here, too," said Kirby. "My place is just down the street."

Rocky hurried up the steps to her home and Cash waited until she had let herself into the room. Then he directed Mullins to go to the plant. He arrived there just as Jimmy Ranger drove up in the first of three taxies. Jimmy unpiled. He was followed by a group of men. They were all neatly attired mechanics. They looked capable. Cash looked them over.

"Come into my office," he said, and led the way through the yard to the office of the Columbia Axle Corp. "James, you should have been here tonight."

"Anything happen?" asked Jimmy.

Cash hurriedly ran through the events, saying, "I'll fill in the rest in the morning."

"Well," said Jimmy, "you've had a very busy night. But so have I."

"What's happened to you?"

"I think you have flushed out another of your helpmates," said Jimmy.

"Don't tell me Fred Cotes has been interfering with you already?" asked Cash.

"Can't I ever tell you anything? How did you know?" asked Jimmy.

"We've known for several days that he wasn't the most friendly confederate we had in this enterprise. What did he do?"

"He spread word around union headquarters in Detroit that we had a strike on up here," said Jimmy.

They had reached Cash's office. Cash turned on the men when they had all got into the room. There were fifteen of them.

"Men," said Cash, "I want this understood before you get going. This is no strike. Every man who is already on this job and sees fit to come with me can stay. You are not replacing anybody. I'll admit there may be some trouble with some of the men here before this thing is settled—"

"Mr. Gorman," said one of the men, "I presume you're Mr. Gorman?"

"I am," said Cash. "What were you going to say?"

"What are your plans?" asked the leader. "For those men, I mean. We can't put union men off a job."

"Have you explained that, James?" Cash asked Jimmy.

"I've done the best I could, Cash," replied Jimmy. "I got the men here on my word of honor that you and Mr. Gardiner wouldn't have anything to do with a strike."

"That suits me," said Cash. "All right, men; here's the story. Mr. Ranger is in charge of this job. He'll put you up in a hotel for tonight. He'll take over in the morning. And every man who is now working on the job, will be kept. I give you my word of honor. And, moreover, I promise each of you a post with this company until these orders we are tooling for, are filled—if you have us going in—how many days, James?"

"With that as a bonus, in addition to what I'm payin' 'em," said Jimmy, "these fellows could probably finish the job in five or six days."

"Make it a week," said Cash, "and I'll pay. And as for the other men, all that need be said to them is that we are doubling the shifts to speed up the task."

"O. K., Mr. Gorman," said the leader.

"And what's your name?" asked Cash.

"McNaughton," said the man. They all shook Cash's hand and Jimmy led them to the street where they bundled into their taxis and went to a modest hotel where Jimmy put them up for a week.

"There's just one missing link?" Cash mused to himself.

"I suppose that's me," said Holmes from the darkened recess of Rocky's office. He walked through the door. He was wild-eyed and nervous. "Well, I had nothing to do with any of this stuff; and I'll tell you I thought you were crazy. Now I believe it. Only, honest, Gorman, how much does that government man think I know? How much does he think I'm connected with that murder? I'm not."

"Well, why not?" asked Cash. "The only reason, perhaps, is that you didn't have nerve enough to go through with it."

"Gorman," said Holmes, "I give you my word of honor—"

"With me, Holmes," interrupted Cash, "the only honor is that of a dollar bill."

"All right," Holmes blurted, "I'll tell you the whole story. Noller, Cotes and I were trying to get hold of the plant. I'll admit that. I thought I could do myself more good with Noller behind me than without any finances, and with no more help than a nitwit like Kirby Stowe."

"But why did you let Cotes talk you into ruining that machinery?"

"I didn't," replied Holmes. "That was his own idea. I was down in Maumee trying to do my best to give Mensor a bill of goods that you were irresponsible and would perhaps try to obtain credit. I told him you'd probably pass yourself as Gardiner's agent, but the truth would be nearer that Gardiner would perhaps not even guarantee your carfare home. Well, it was a long shot; and it backfired. Mensor telephoned Gardiner while I was there and he said to give you anything you wanted—"

"Wait a minute," said Cash. "Phineas T. Gardiner said that to Mensor?"

"Yes," said Holmes, "but he swore

Mensor to secrecy. That didn't include me, of course, because Mensor was certain I wouldn't tell you anything which would make things easier for you."

"But why are you telling me all this?"

"Well, I'm through," said Holmes. "I played the wrong horse. Cotes has run out and anybody would have a hard time declaring Noller into this mess. I'm only trying to save my own neck, and you can save it for me."

"Why me?" asked Cash.

"You and I are the only persons who saw the man through that hole the night he came back for the piece of dowel wood. That's why I know I'm through. I know who doctored that machinery base. I saw him."

The man was miserable. He ran his hands through his hair. He was a mess, and he knew it. Cash thought everything was working out as he wanted it himself. Why should he torture a fellow? But there was one thing he couldn't help but covet., That management stock.

"I'll tell you," said Cash, "you come here in the morning and turn that management stock over to me, and I'll do everything I can for you. I'm sorry you saw things as you did, Holmes. But you see Gardiner and I have been in many things together and we generally play square. When I told you I held all the cards, the other day, I wasn't fooling. Get a good night's sleep."

Cash thought to himself that he would do that very thing himself. His body ached from weariness. He found Mullins asleep.

"Mullins," he said, "you mustn't do any sleeping at all at home."

"Working for you, Mr. Gorman," said a driver, "a fellow gets very little chance to get home."

"You can sleep in the morning, Mullins," said Cash, "because I'm going to have some laughs out of this thing if it's the last thing I ever do."

CASH went directly to Phineas T. Gardiner's room in the hotel and discovered he had left. But Cash Gorman was not worried any longer. He thought he could enjoy a good night's sleep. He did that, as a matter of fact, and didn't waken until through his sleep, Phineas T. Gardiner's voice barked at him from the receiver of a telephone.

"Don't yell, Phineas," he said. "I'm just enjoying my morning rest. Had a rough night." He put down the phone. It rang and rang and rang. But Cash refused to answer it. He went to sleep again. How much later he didn't know, but sometime after the first call, Gardines was again on the telephone.

"You young fool," Phineas shouted, "will you get down here and clear me of this foolish charge."

"What foolish charge? Where are you?"

"I don't know," said Gardiner. "I'm being held incommunicado in a private home and I don't know whether I'm kidnaped or under arrest."

"How's the food?" asked Cash. "In jail they starve you. Kidnapers always feed a big fat one like you real well."

Sparks nearly flew out of the receiver. "Will you stop floundering with your insipid humor," yelled Gardiner, "and get me out of this thing?"

"Well, Phineas," said Cash, "I told you last night not to fool around with this. I told you it was loaded and you wouldn't believe me. Now you are in the pickle with me. Only I'm not caught yet—"

"But you will be," demanded Gardiner. "I'll tell 'em you are occupying my room. They'll get you . . . you murderer, you!" He was screaming by this time.

"Now, listen, Phineas," said Cash, "there is nothing I can do. If I had had your assurance last night that you would pay for this new machinery, I could have brought it from Detroit and flushed out these high-binders and spies and financial saboteurs. No, you wouldn't do it; not until your own hide is threatened. I'm sorry, there's nothing I can do."

"Now you listen to me, you scoundrel," barked Gardiner, "don't you hang up on me again. I'll cut your heart out for this if I ever lay my hands on you. I'll pay your damn machinery bill. I told that fool in Maumee that I would, a week ago. Why in hell he didn't tell you, I don't know?"

"Could it be," asked Cash sweetly, "that you told him not to tell me?"

"Never mind," snapped Gardiner. Then he stopped. "Oh, so this is one of your scurvy tricks. You've had me kidnaped! You . . . you . . . you— Tell this gorilla of yours that I'll send you and him to jail for life! Tell him to let me loose."

"If you'll stop talking long enough to put him on the phone," said Cash, "I'll do just that."

One of Connelly's men took the phone and asked for Gorman. Cash gave him the key word he had arranged with Connelly that night before. Then he hurried through a bath and went to the plant. He expected fireworks from all directions when he got there. Present were Holmes and Walker, Kirby Stowe, and, most surprising, Cotes.

"Well," said Cash, "this is a genuine surprise. Fred, I didn't expect to see you here. And you, Mr. Walker. You come to my rescue a little late. You missed your quarry."

"Not at all," said Walker. "We figured that your friends would prove no

FULL SIZE PLANS OF THE 46" WING SPREAD 3 TIME

Moffett Trophy Winner

THE WORLD'S BEST RUBBER-POWERED MODEL AIRPLANE OFFERED YOU FOR ONLY 25 CENTS

● The Moffett Trophy is the prize offered for the best rubber-powered model airplane in the world, and models from all over the world compete.

This model, designed by Roy Nelder, won the Moffett Trophy three times, in 1938, 1939 and 1940. It just must be the world's best model airplane.

We purchased the plans from Roy and are offering you his full-sized working plans so you may build a model airplane just like his and win your local competition. All you have to do is lay the plans on a flat surface and cut out your balsa wood and paper just as instructed. Then fit them together. It's worlds of fun!

Send in, today, the coupon and twenty-five cents for your champion model.

Street & Smith Publications, Inc.
79 Seventh Avenue, New York City

Here's my quarter. Send me the full-size plans for the Roy Nelder Moffett Winning Model Airplane.

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

CITY .... STATE ....

equal for your wits and that we could expect you back in town again. I had more important work to attend to."

"Your confidence in me is deserved, I assure you," said Cash. "I feel nothing more kindly toward you this morning than the utmost animus."

"You mustn't be too hasty," said Walker.

"And I wouldn't judge too hastily in this direction, either," said Fred Cotes.

"Now," said Cash, "after all. Let's have some sense here."

Holmes sat down. Cash fell into the chair behind his desk. Jimmy Ranger came in and looked around from one man to another.

"Come in, James," said Cash, "it seems we were all crazy."

Two men came to the door and Walker nodded to Holmes. "Your escort has arrived, Mr. Holmes," he said. Holmes got up from his chair and walked out of the room without a glance at Cash.

"There," said Walker, "goes your murderer. And the ace of the saboteurs."

"What?" said Cash. "Why, I was alone with him here late last night."

"At one forty-five this morning," said Walker.

"Where were you?" asked Cash.

"Right behind him," said Walker. "He was the man with the bomb. He wanted you out of here."

"What of those Nazi and Soviet agents?"

"Well, they weren't ready to do a murder for it, though they did one. Pete Coyne was murdered, perhaps by Henry. Rigamoroff had nothing to do with it, as I told you."

"Why did you let them get away?" demanded Cash.

"Well," said Walker, "we cannot afford an incident until we are certain. We were sure that they had nothing to do with the bombing. Moreover, we were certain that they would threaten you sooner or later. But we were certain, too, that you would be able to get out of the way as it happened."

"Very nice of you," said Cash, "but I still don't see why you let them get away."

"Foreign agents lose their usefulness when their identity becomes known and they resort to violence. We have fingerprints and photographs of all of the men and women who have worked with Henry and Rigamoroff. They'll have to get out of the country and get out quickly. And they will not be able to do it without an escort. And if you can pin that Coyne thing on them, they won't get away at all."

"But why didn't you come to our rescue last night when we were in a jam?" Cash asked. Then he looked at Fred Cotes. "And it seems I have maligned you, Fred."

"Well," said Cotes, "I was playing with Walker. He asked me to, and I did my part. He got onto the financial play the minute he got to town. He told me the way the cards would fall and advised Noller and me to get on the horse with you. It may not seem as if I was on your side with those phony estimates—"

"They certainly didn't do me any good," said Jimmy Ranger.

"They did with me, Jimmy," said Cotes. "It just goes to prove that you can't fool a good engineer. And don't worry about those men. We'll use 'em, and use 'em plenty, now that this thing is clearing up. There's more business waiting for us than we can possibly take care of."

"But," asked Jimmy, "what of those phone calls last night?"

"That was Holmes calling fellows that knew me remotely," said Cotes. "You notice he didn't call any top-flight union officials who might have known my voice."

"It's too mixed up for me," said Jimmy. "When do we go to work?"

"There's just one thing left," said Cash. "Tell me, Fred, what were you doing bending over that hole, looking for that piece of dowel wood?"

"The same thing that you were doing," said Cotes. "Walker saw it same as you and I did. I came back to watch for it. I wanted to be certain it was still there. And we were so close to catching Holmes red-handed that night that I sweat whenever I think of it."

"Why, how come?" asked Cash.

"One of my men was with him," said Walker. "You were rapped on the head by a person in that room that nobody knew was there. And why he didn't belt you before Fred and my man got there, is one of those mysteries. But when you all got there together, he thought he could start a scuffle, which he did. And, believe it or not, he got the piece of wood and got out of the place before the lights went on. That proved to us that it could only be one man. Fred proved it, I mean. He showed us a back stairway which hadn't been used for years. And there was only one man besides himself who knew how to get through the door into that stairway. After that night we watched Holmes closely."

"Yes," said Cash, "that's clear. But when the accident happened, he was in Maumee. He told me so himself."

"He figured on that. That's where the dowel came in. It was actually not a dowel at all. It was a small loaded cartridge which exploded when it expanded. The weight of the base expanded. When the cartridge exploded, it burst a vial of acid below it into that hole right on top of the beam. The acid spread and ate its way through in a few hours. Then it was just a matter of weight. Nobody knew it but him; and nobody knew the acid but the Nazi."

"Then he was working with them?" asked Cash.

"Yes," said Fred. "He brought the plan to Noller and me last spring but we thumbs-downed it. I said there was no chance of getting our production through to any foreign country, even if they did pay a premium, and while I'll take whatever I can get hold of, my patriotism could not go for that. Neither could Noller's."

"But why Holmes?" asked Cash.

"He was money hungry," said Cotes.

Something akin to a cyclone burst through the main office twin doors and into the room. It was Phineas T. Gardiner, purple with rage. "You . . . you . . . you—" he barked at Cash. "I'll have you put behind bars for this!"

"For what, Mr. Gardiner?" asked Walker. "For being guarded at my direction overnight because you feared for your safety."

"Nonsense," said Phineas, "this young whippersnapper had me kidnaped. Arrest him. That's a Federal offense."

"Not unless they took you into another State," said Cash, "and, Phineas, the only other State I see you in, is a state of confusion. Calm down! You have yourself a paying-and-going axle factory!"

"And one word out of you," snapped Gardiner, "and I'll break one over your head!"

THE END.

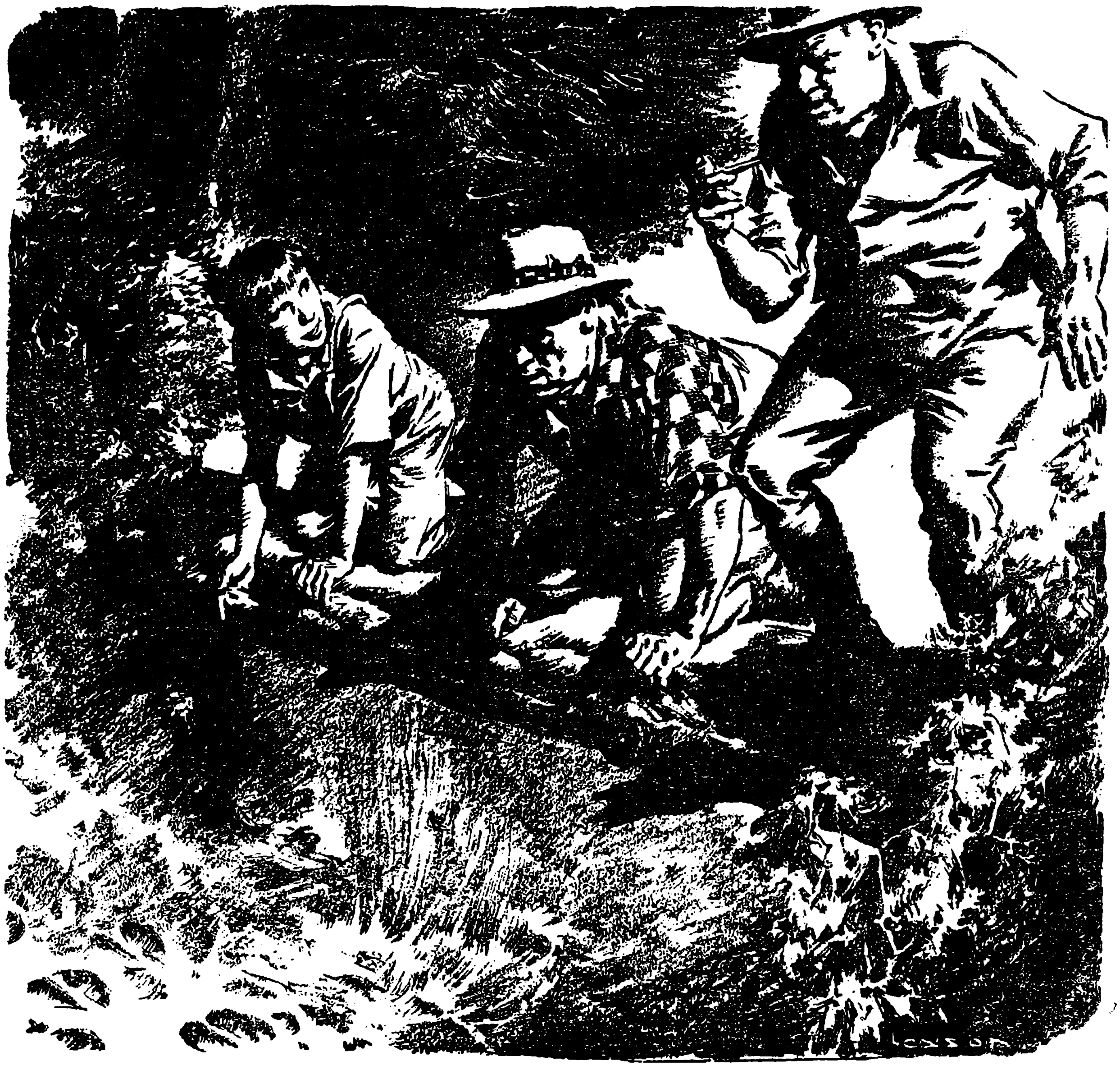
Tracks Near Peaked Hill

BY STANLEY VICKERS

• Tan claimed he'd found something interesting back in the woods. He would show it to Fletch—for a price!

TAN twisted his hand behind his head and expertly spun his father's hunting cap so that the peak shaded his eyes. It was quite a simple maneuver because the hat was several sizes too large. Besides, Tan had practiced the trick until he knew just how much spin would revolve the peak into perfect position for a quick survey of the terrain.

The object of his examination at present was the front porch of Fletch Lonson's general store, the outpost of Peaked Hill village, population 527, counting the newly born Corbin twins. From where Tan stood, a quarter of a



mile away from Lonson's place on the dirt road leading into Peaked Hill, it appeared that the front porch of the general store was empty. Tan was about ready to trudge back to his father's farm, figuring that Fletch was away fishing, when he heard the echo of Mrs. Lonson's shrill cry of "Fletch" fairly shake the valley. In answer to it, Tan watched the burly, white-headed shape clump its way toward the store from the barn.

With a mental reservation of thanks to Mrs. Lonson, Tan resumed his travel to the store. By way of experiment, he shouted the name Fletch to himself. All he could get was a sharply one-syllabled sound. How Mrs. Lonson achieved her long-drawn-out, three-syllabled cry for her spouse remained a mystery.

Fletch had evidently effected a speedy disposal of his chore, for he was comfortably rocking on the porch when Tan approached. He waved a silent greeting to Tan with his pipe. Mrs. Lonson pressed an angular face against a window screen.

"Hayin' finished at your place, Tan?" she queried.

"Yep, ma'am. This dry spell 'lowed us to clean it up."

"Your dad picked up the mail this morning, if that be what you're after," Fletch ventured.

"Did he?" Tan kicked his sneakered foot against the step as though in disgust. No reason to let Fletch know the truth of why he'd come if Fletch chose to think otherwise. Anyway, he hadn't told a lie. He'd just asked if his father *had* picked up the mail. Sister Marjie had been with him, and she *might have* picked it up. Tan shifted this trend of thought to tackle the problem at hand.

"Fletch," he asked casually, "long as I'm down this way, would you mind showin' me that bamboo rod you got

This was the man Slocum was hired to guard

. . . and he was dead!

Eddie Slocum couldn't believe it. He fastened his horrified eyes on the body of Roger Jackson . . . this was the man he had been commissioned to guard . . . and he was dead. And the police would be after him any minute now, charging him with the crime.

THE BOX FROM BURMA is one of the most unusual and gripping mystery novelettes you've ever read. The author—Frank Gruber, famous best-selling mystery writer!

Mike Merrit was tough—but he couldn't take it when he saw the girl he loved sprawled out on a sidewalk . . . crushed and broken. There's fast and furious spy-ring action and a startling denouement in THE LITTLE RED BOOK, by Steve Fisher.

Other stories by Alan Hathway, Norman A. Daniels and others in this extra-special, thrill-packed issue of May

CLUES-
DETECTIVE STORIES

10c A COPY AT ALL NEWSSTANDS

hangin' inside? I'm figurin' to buy one I saw in the catalogue, but I'd kinda like to compare 'em first."

Fletch's laughter boomed. He hoisted his girth laboriously from the chair and went inside. He returned and handed the nine feet of waving bamboo to Tan. Tan tried to keep the sparkle in his eyes from betraying him, but it was no use. It was simply the finest fishing pole he had ever seen. Finer than any he had ever seen in *any* catalogue. He was sure of that.

"Is it—still the same price, Fletch?"

"'Fraid it is, Tan. Twelve dollars. Guess that's a little steep for a twelve-year-old feller like yourself. How much you got saved up now?"

"Well," Tan spoke importantly, "dad's been payin' me some for helpin' him hay. Guess I got near five dollars." Tan knew exactly how much he had. He had counted it carefully every time he had thought of the bamboo rod during the past two weeks. The sum was four dollars and twenty-five cents, which, after all, *was* pretty close to five dollars.

"Now, I ain't goin' to take no down payments on this," Fletch anticipated him, "so don't start tryin' to make a deal. Come huntin' season an' some city feller will buy 'er—fer cash!"

Tan cast his eyes to the ground as though digesting the disappointment, but in reality he was trying to conceal excitement. He had not anticipated that Fletch would bring up the matter of hunting himself. He had expected that he would have to steer the conversation into those channels gradually. The sudden jump into the channel left him unprepared—but only for the moment. After all, Fletch himself had often told him of his shrewd bargainings. And how "horse tradin'" was honest and respectable as long as you did not tell an outright lie or get caught on the short end of the deal, respectively.

Tan summoned the courage he had been mustering for the past week. "Fletch, how is the huntin' goin' to be this year? Expectin' many city folks up?"

The old trapper, storekeeper and guide crossed his legs in an attitude of complete disgust. "Tan, I don't reckon anybody'll be up this neck of the woods for huntin' 'less somebody round here finds traces of moose. Warn't a damn moose bagged here last fall. Seems like they all picked up and headed north."

Tan was sidetracked momentarily by the amusing thought of moose "picking up" before they headed away. "That's goin' to hurt your guidin' business, ain't it, Fletch?" Tan offered, almost too hopefully.

The storekeeper gazed at his young questioner suspiciously. "Tan," he demanded sharply, "what you got in your craw. 'Tain't natural that a feller your age should be worried 'bout the money it looks like I ain't goin' to make. Are you fixin' to bargain with me about somethin'?"

Tan pursed his lips thoughtfully. "I remember you told me once it was all right for a feller to bargain. Well, I like that fishin' pole of yours, and I think I got a trade you might be interested in."

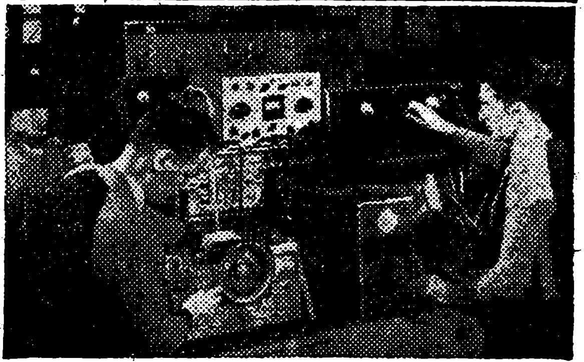
Fletch guffawed and slapped his leg. "I just knowed you'd come back to that pole if you stayed round it long 'nough. Now what you got figured out?"

Tan was beginning to enjoy the situation. He lolled farther on the porch and slouched on his elbow. "I can trade you somethin' that'll bring city folks up here for huntin'. Guess that ought to be

LEARN RADIO

STEADY JOBS... GREATER OPPORTUNITIES FOR TRAINED MEN

Mail coupon today for news about Your Big Opportunity to get into Radio NOW—the Giant Field that offers big pay (many earn $35–$40–$50 a week or more) . . . steady work . . . and a great future. Dozens of interesting branches now open to TRAINED MEN include Radio Broadcasting, Television, Talking Pictures, Radio Servicing, Public Address System Work, Ship and Aircraft Radio, Police Radio, etc.

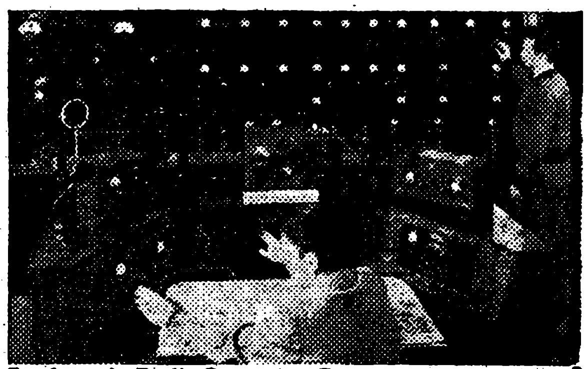


Students in Radio Service Course use modern equipment to test and repair receivers.

I'll Finance Your Training

I want to help you get the training you need. Read the list below of interesting subjects which you "Learn-By-Doing" at Coyne Radio School. It's easy . . . practical. **You do actual work on real, full-sized radio equipment... not by correspondence** or by classroom reciting. Right now, choose the course you want. Common school education is all you need for Servicing Course; two years high school, or its equivalent, required for Master Radio Operating Course.

Even if you don't have a lot of money, it's **still** easy for you to learn Radio at Coyne . . . because I'll Finance Your Training. **Pay tuition in easy monthly payments after graduation.** Mail coupon for details.



Students in Radio Operating Course get actual experience at control console and broadcast transmitter.

"LEARN BY DOING"

ACTUAL SHOP WORK ON REAL LIVE EQUIPMENT

RADIO SERVICE COURSE

8 WEEKS This condensed, easy course prepares you for a good-pay radio service job. Course includes: Elementary Radio and Electronics • Practical Television • Building and Testing Radio Receivers • Operation and Function of Various Types of Vacuum Tubes, Tuning Coils, Condensers, Transformers, Speakers, Power Supply Units, etc. • Auto Radios • Frequency Modulation Radio Receivers • Principles of Motion Picture Sound Work • Principles of Public Address Systems • Operation and servicing of sound heads, microphones, photo-cells, exciter lamps, lens adjustments, pre-amplifiers, power amplifiers, power speakers, tone controls, etc. • Elementary Acoustics, Etc., etc., etc. Full details in my big, free book.

RADIO OPERATING COURSE

5 MONTHS Here is our complete, practical course in Radio. Prepares you for Government Radio Operator's License exam., Radio Telephone 1st Class License exam., Radio Telegraph 2nd Class License exam. **Course includes everything covered in 8 weeks' course, PLUS:** Handling and operating modern transmitting equipment, including short wave • Radio Telegraph code practice • Handling microphones and studio equipment • Construction, operation, care and testing of transmitting equipment • Handling studio programs • Microphone technique • Operation of recording machines, record players, and pick-ups • Frequency Modulation Transmission • Practical operation of radio control desk and remote control • Federal Communication Commission rules and laws • Operation of Mobile Radio Apparatus, Etc., etc., etc. My Big Free Book has complete details.

EARN WHILE LEARNING

Many ambitious fellows work part-time to help out with living expenses while training at Coyne. If you need this part-time work, my Employment Manager will help you get it. Coupon will bring you full details of this "Earn-While-Learning" Plan. After you graduate my Employment Department will give you **FREE LIFETIME EMPLOYMENT SERVICE**—REAL HELP in finding a job. Send for complete information today.

H. C. LEWIS, Pres.

Operating Control Panel of short-wave transmitter

GET MY STORY

Send coupon today for my Big New Book, "Your Future in Radio". Packed with facts and pictures of students at work in my shops. Coupon will also bring details on how I'll Finance Your Training. Act NOW! Sending for this interesting, free book can be **your first step to success. No obligation. No salesman will call. Mail coupon today.**

H. C. Lewis

H. C. LEWIS, President
COYNE ELECTRICAL SCHOOL, Radio Division
500 S. Paulina St., Dept. 31-7A, Chicago, Ill.

Please send me your BIG, NEW RADIO BOOK, all details of your courses, and your plans to help me get ahead.

NAME..

ADDRESS..

CITY.......................STATE...............

COYNE ELECTRICAL SCHOOL
RADIO DIVISION
500 S. Paulina St. • Dept. 31-7A • Chicago

worth a fishin' pole," he concluded emphatically.

Fletch grinned ruefully. "Ain't no use, Tan. There's one of them city noospapermen visitin' over at Paradox City. He writes stuff in the city papers so folks down there know where to go with the best chances o' gettin' moose. He drove up through here yesterday, an' after inquirin' round he soon found out that moose an' Peaked Hill has parted company."

"Well," Tan replied slowly, "what I'd trade you would convince him that there be lots of moose in Peaked Hill. Yep," Tan added solemnly, "it'd sure convince him."

Fletch sat up in the rocker. He waggled a gnarled finger at Tan. "Now see here, young un, you foolin'? You discovered somethin' with all that trampin' in the woods you do?"

Tan gulped at Fletch's explosive reaction, but struggled to maintain a taunting calmness. "I found somethin' I sure would *like* to show you, Fletch. Somethin' would let you show that city writer there be moose signs about in Peaked Hill!"

Fletch settled back in the rocker and spit out the hook again. "Bosh," he laughed. "Don't believe you, Tan. You're just lettin' that fishin' pole run 'way with your 'magination. I suppose that's what you're fixin' to trade me for. "Well"—and Fletch punctuated the remark with a fling of his legs to the railing—"it won't work!"

Tan stood up to drive the argument home. "Fletch, if you can bring that writer feller round tomorrow I'll take you someplace and show you somethin'. If it don't change his mind 'bout there bein' moose here, why then you both still had a good walk. But if it does convince him and you, why then I get traded that pole."

Fletch thought rapidly. "Tan, you be here at ten o'clock tomorrow mornin'. I'll drive into Paradox City early and try to bring that feller back with me. Then you can take us for that little walk. I won't mind the exercise any, and I don't much care whether he does. And if your story be true—why then you get the pole. I reckon it'd be worth it to me, at that."

Without another word—it being unnecessary—Tan arose and began trudging back the dirt road which wound its way through the valley toward his father's farm. It had taken some time to sell the idea to Fletch, but it had been worth it, even if he did get called down for being home late for milking.

AT ten o'clock the following morning Tan found Fletch in the usual porch rocker with a stout, red-faced man beside him. Tan immediately deduced that Mr. Red Face was the city writer, for together with the obvious fact that he was a stranger was the also-obvious fact that he was from the city. He wore high leather boots with a brightly colored stocking roll at their top, fancy whipcord breeches, and a hat which matched his red-checkered shirt. It was a warm get-up, in Tan's opinion, for the mellow, late-September day.

"This be the tyke I been tellin' you 'bout," Fletch drawled to his companion as Tan swung up the steps to the porch. "He knows the woods hereabouts, and he should know moose sign." Fletch looked briefly at Tan and pointed toward Mr. Red Face. "Tan, this be Mr. Hemington. He's goin' to hike with us to those signs you told me 'bout yest'd'y."

"How long a trek this figger to be,

Tan?" Fletch asked. "We don't want to go traipsin' too fur without we have some grub along."

" 'Tain't far, Fletch," Tan replied. "Up Scofield Pond way. If we had a automobile we could ride to where we hit into the woods from the dirt road."

Mr. Hemington immediately suggested that they take his car, but Fletch demurred.

"Not that I ain't hankerin' to ride in that shiny new one o' yours," he chuckled, "but we got to go quite a piece up into the hills, and the ruts get pretty deep. They're slingin' these new cars so low these days that they ain't much use in this country. Mr. Ford built his Model T to order fer our travelin'."

The way took them past Tan's home, and he was just as pleased that none of the family was out in the fields to wave hello.

Mr. Hemington was just beginning to lose some of his early enthusiasm over the expedition because of the severe jouncing when Tan directed Fletch to pull over to the side of the road.

"It's about two mile into the woods from here," he said.

They all piled out and followed Tan into the cool pine. The terrain rose rapidly.

"Scofield Pond is atop the mountain," Fletch offered to Mr. Hemington. "Beavers built it up by damming Stony Lonesome Brook. Used to come up here often fer trout 'fore I opened the store."

Tan spent the next mile in silent speculation of how the store seemed to tie Fletch to it, although there was hardly ever anyone in it, except in the summertime, when straying motorists from the State road stopped at Fletch's lone gas pump.

Mr. Hemington finally broke the silence with a weak request for a rest stop. He loosened the laces of his newly acquired leather boots and unbuttoned the front of the wool shirt.

"You still know where you're goin'?" Fletch asked sharply of Tan.

Tan nodded solemnly. "We keep followin' the trail till we hit a stump that's all chawed by bear. The sign is down in a little holler from there. 'Tain't much farther on."

Finally Tan stopped and pointed to a stump beside the trail. Fletch came up and examined it carefully. "That was sure 'nough chawed up by a bear lookin' fer ants. But we ain't lookin' fer ants or bear, neither. Where d'ya go from here, Tan?"

The youthful guide began clambering down from the trail into a damp hollow beside it. The dampness was caused by a spring which bubbled itself away into the mossy earth around it. A fallen tree trunk lay across the spongy spot, and Tan climbed out on it. He pointed down to the soggy ground.

"There be the sign, Fletch."

Both Fletch and Mr. Hemington walked cautiously out on the trunk after him. After safely negotiating the maneuver, their eyes followed Tan's outstretched arm, pointing toward the ground beneath them.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Mr. Hemington. "There has been a herd of the creatures here."

"Well, I don't calculate they's been necessarily that many," Fletch replied, " 'cause one moose can cause a powerful lot o' tracks if he jest walks around in one spot enough. But them be sure-'nough moose tracks, I'll allow."

Mr. Hemington was noticeably excited. He got to his knees on the log and peered closely at the sets of split-heart tracks, firmly embedded in the turf. "How long ago would you say these were made, Mr. Lonson?" he asked feverishly.

Fletch squinted down his nose at them. "We had heavy rainfall less than three days ago that would've wiped 'em out. Looks like they was made by a pretty big feller, too, from the way they're sunk down."

"This is really a delightful surprise," Mr. Hemington murmured. "I was actually convinced that the section was barren of moose. This gives me quite a scoop for my 'Hunting with Hemington' column, because so many of my readers find it inconvenient to travel farther north for their hunting."

Mr. Hemington babbled all the way back to the car quite happily. Fletch mentioned casually that when the official hunting season started in three weeks, his services would be available for guiding. Mr. Hemington promised fervently to publicize the fact in his column. He even got out a pad and noted Fletch's rates.

IT was near dinner time, and Tan was beginning to feel the pangs of the noon hour. He decided to leave the car when it passed his house. He would even pass up possession of the fishing pole until the evening for food now. When they sighted the farm, Tan made his request that they drop him there. Fletch made no comment.

"I'll walk down to your place 'safternoon, Fletch," he flung over his shoulder, and he received an amiable wave from Fletch and Mr. Hemington as the Ford bounced away.

After dinner was over, Tan was eager to be back at Fletch's less something happen to the pole before he appropriated it as his rightful share of the trade. However, his plans were snagged temporarily before he had a chance to slip as far as the farm gate.

"Tan," his father boomed. "Got a chore for ye. Seems like you're round here less and less!"

He loped back to the porch, trying to conceal his disappointment. His dad opened the screen door and came out to meet him.

"Son," his dad chastened, "if yore goin' to save and cure everythin' you get yore hands on, ye got to consider the family a little. Now ma's complainin' that the woodchuck hide you got stretched on the woodshed fer dryin' is stinkin' up her kitchen. Better take time to rub some more salt in it and keep things peaceful."

Tan grinned. He had noticed a peculiar odor about the back of the house, but he had entirely forgotten the skin in the excitement of trading with Fletch.

"Danged if I can figger why you bother with all that trash ye keep in the shed, anyhow," his father concluded.

"Be surprised how that stuff comes in handy, dad," he answered, and darted in to the kitchen for a few scoops of salt.

By the time that the woodchuck was rendered less offensive, the afternoon sun was sinking to its three-o'clock spot in the mountain sky. Tan washed, gulped a glass of milk and some sustaining bread, and was off down the dirt road to Peaked Hill village.

More disappointment was suffered when Mrs. Lonson informed him that Fletch had left in the car about an hour before. "He'd better be back soon, though," she shrilled, " 'cause he's got to git me ice 'fore everythin' sours. Sit down on a rocker and wait, Tan," she added in a mellower key.

Tan agreed to do so. But before he

seated himself he darted into the store for a quick appraisal. He breathed a sigh of relief. The pole was still hanging in all its splendor from its usual hook.

It was almost another hour before the penetration of a familiar chug-chug caused Tan to open sleepy eyes. Fletch was pulling up before the barn. While Tan arose and stretched himself, Fletch let his hound dog, Beth, out of the car and into the barn, and then tramped toward the porch.

"Now there you be, 'waitin' your pound of flesh, Shylock," Fletch chortled.

"I'm waitin' fer the pole, if that be what you mean," Tan grinned.

Fletch flopped wearily into the rocker vacated by Tan. He extricated a moldy corncob from his jacket, filled it with rough cut and lighted it in long, sucking gasps.

"Well, Tan, you're very welcome to it. I figger to get considerable business in a couple of weeks just 'cause of what you showed me and Mr. Hemington. So I reckon you deserve what you're goin' to get. Fact is, I think you deserve lots more. You're a sportin' feller, so I'll make you a little wager."

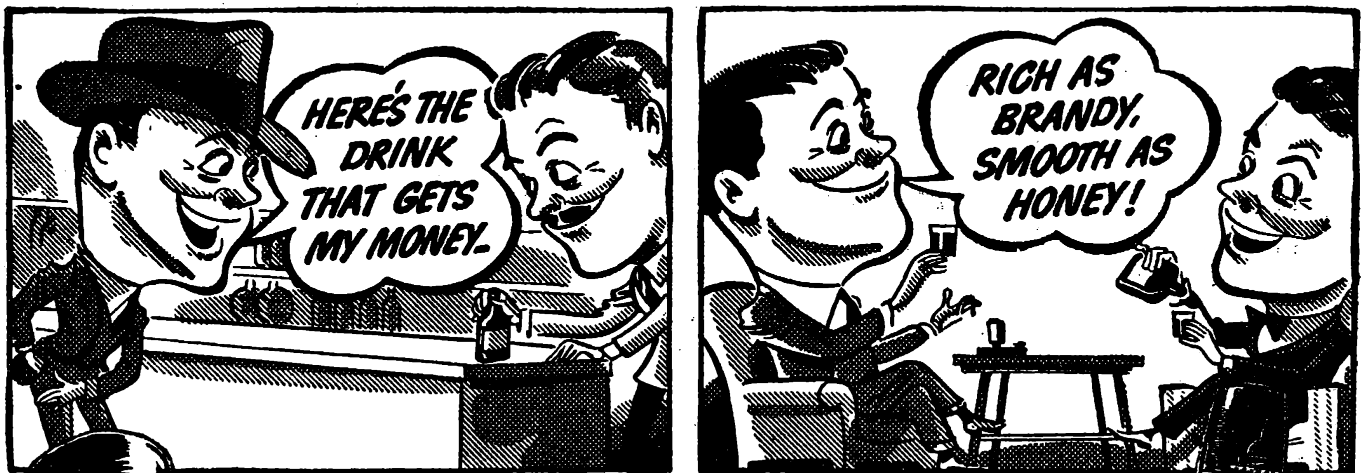
Tan fidgeted uncomfortably where he was perched on the railing. "What kind of a wager, Fletch?"

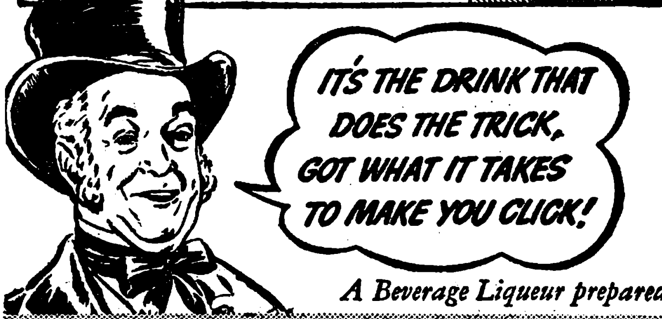
"Know where I been?" Fletch parried. At Tan's wondering ignorance, he continued: "I been right back where we was today, examinin' them tracks—and you know what?"

"What?" Tan gulped fearfully.

"I'll bet you a new line and reel 'gainst that pole that I collar the critter

OLD MR. BOSTON SAYS: "MY APRICOT NECTAR IS A TREAT YOU'LL CHEER!"


HERE'S THE DRINK THAT GETS MY MONEY.
RICH AS BRANDY, SMOOTH AS HONEY!


IT'S THE DRINK THAT DOES THE TRICK, GOT WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE YOU CLICK!

Mr. Boston's Apricot Nectar is a liquor with the tempting flavor of ripe apricots. "Rich as brandy, smooth as honey," you'll enjoy drinking it straight. A handy drinking cup tops each pint bottle.

A Beverage Liqueur prepared by Ben-Burk, Inc., Boston, Mass.

OLD
Mr. BOSTON
APRICOT NECTAR
A BEVERAGE LIQUEUR

OLD MR. BOSTON APRICOT NECTAR

ALSO BLACKBERRY • PEACH • WILD CHERRY—70 PROOF

Monastery Secrets

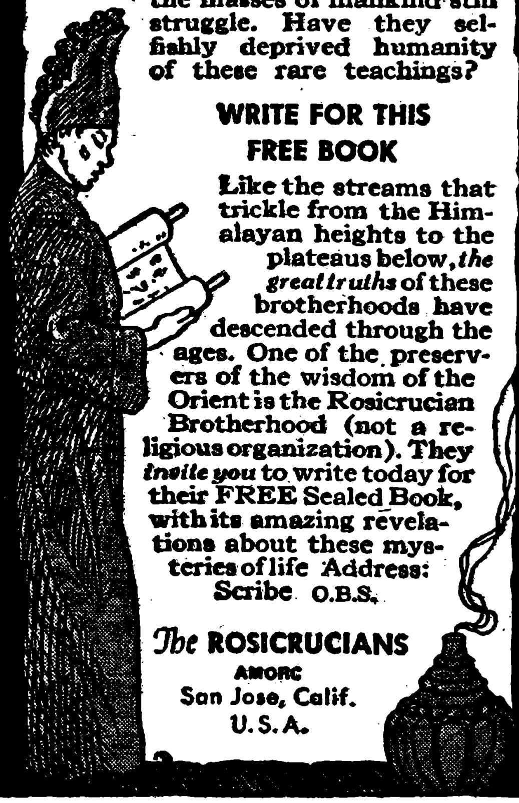
. . . THE FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE OF TIBET

What strange secrets of nature are locked within the mountain fastness of Tibet? What control over the forces of the Universe do these cloistered sages exercise? For centuries the world has sought to know the source of their power—to learn *their mastery of life*, and *their faculty for overcoming problems* with which the masses of mankind still struggle. Have they selfishly deprived humanity of these rare teachings?

WRITE FOR THIS FREE BOOK

Like the streams that trickle from the Himalayan heights to the plateaus below, *the great truths* of these brotherhoods have descended through the ages. One of the preservers of the wisdom of the Orient is the Rosicrucian Brotherhood (not a religious organization). They *invite you* to write today for their FREE Sealed Book, with its amazing revelations about these mysteries of life. Address: Scribe O.B.S.

The ROSICRUCIANS
AMORC
San Jose, Calif.
U.S.A.



MONEY MINDED MEN

HOT POTATO CHIPS

Here's your chance—a money-making business of your own. Turn potatoes into newest kind of Potato Chips with my improved outfit. Makes delicious Chips at low cost. A few hours practice does it. Complete outfit includes: (1) Rotary Slicer (2) Mechanical Peeler for quick operation; (3) Vitreous Enamel Frying Vat; (4) Grease Extractor for extracting excess grease. Everything ready to start operations at once. Begin anywhere—city, village, town. Potatoes cheap and plentiful. Wholesale or retail. Steady year round business. Groceries, markets, restaurants, taverns do the retailing for you.

START YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Great quantities of Chips are eaten daily. Profit large—unusually so. You can start this money-making business on a SMALL outlay of cash. Write for Potato Chip Booklet.

Long Eakins Co., 440-S High St., Springfield, Ohio

1
2
3
4

that made those tracks 'fore the second day of huntin' season!"

Tan creased his brown-skinned face in a wide, white grin. "I'm figurin' that'll take fancy huntin' in a short time," he joshed. "Why, that critter might be miles away from Scofield Pond by now."

"I got reason to believe he ain't, and a powerful lot of faith in my huntin'." Fletch laughed and waved the end of the pipe admonishingly. "So I'm warnin' you—I'm not outright givin' you a line and reel, 'cause I expect to bag that game once I set my mind to it."

Tan thought rapidly. It would be a shame to put his old trout reel on that new pole. "Tell you what, Fletch," he said seriously, "I got that pole pretty easylike. The feet of that moose really won it fer me. So I'll just take that wager and give you a chance to come out even. I'll come down here the night of the first day of the season. That'll be next Tuesday. You got to have the critter that made the tracks safe in your barn then. Is it a bet?"

Fletch took his hand and confirmed it. "I'm an old codger to be runnin' down a young buck in that short a time, but it's a bet."

TAN was kept busy the following week. It was coming time to assemble the wood supply for the winter. Tan's dad had said that as soon as they had a snow the chopping would start. The snow was necessary, because the logs had to be skidded out of the woods into the pasture land and then sledded to the shed.

The first day of the hunting season was a torture to Tan. He had been assigned to grease and tighten the log runners of the home-constructed sled which was used for the hauling of the wood. He raised his head unconsciously from his task every time he heard the echo of a shot ring through the valley, fearful lest Fletch had bagged his moose.

Mercifully, he was spared helping with the dishes. Once in a while, when Marjie had a date to go square dancing, he was relegated to the hateful chore. But not tonight. He was reaching for his cap before he had finished wiping the last crumbs of pork pie from his lips.

He skipped down the dirt road, one hand on his hip pocket to keep the flashlight, necessary for the return trip, from bouncing free. When he came within sight of Fletch, smoking on the store porch, he assumed a more sedate walk, diplomatically.

Fletch greeted him with a morose smile, as though he regretted the task at hand. "I got a surprise fer you, Tan. Come on to the barn."

Tan's heart sank momentarily. But no, it could not be that Fletch would display a moose, quartered and hanging from the barn beams. This was just another joke to make him more anxious. He followed Fletch to the barn.

When it was reached, Fletch beckoned him in to its dark interior and stooped to light a lantern which had been hanging just inside the sliding doors. Then Fletch stepped in after Tan and carefully bolted the doors.

Tan sat down wonderingly in some hay and gazed questioningly about him. It was too dark for his gaze to penetrate all the corners, so he shifted it back to Fletch.

Fletch dropped to one knee, as though to be closer to Tan. His eyes wrinkled a little, as though in amusement or sympathy. "Tan," he said softly, "first off, I got the critter right here in the barn. But maybe it'll take a bit of explainin'."

Tan was disappointed, but he hastened to say, "I'm glad you got one, Fletch. A feller can't win all his trades."

"You still ain't understanding, Tan. This critter I got ain't got any horns. Leastwise, not visible ones!"

Fletch gestured to Beth, his hound dog, which had approached from the shadows. "I took her up with me to where you showed us them tracks. Beth didn't pay no attention to 'em. Then I 'membered that your dad got a moose 'bout four years ago. Then I 'membered that you got a powerful penchant fer saltin' away and keeping skins and everythin' you get your hands on. Then I 'membered that your dad probably didn't keep the feet of that moose 'cause they ain't much good in a stew—though if they be kept and stuck in soft ground from a log they be awful deceivin'!"

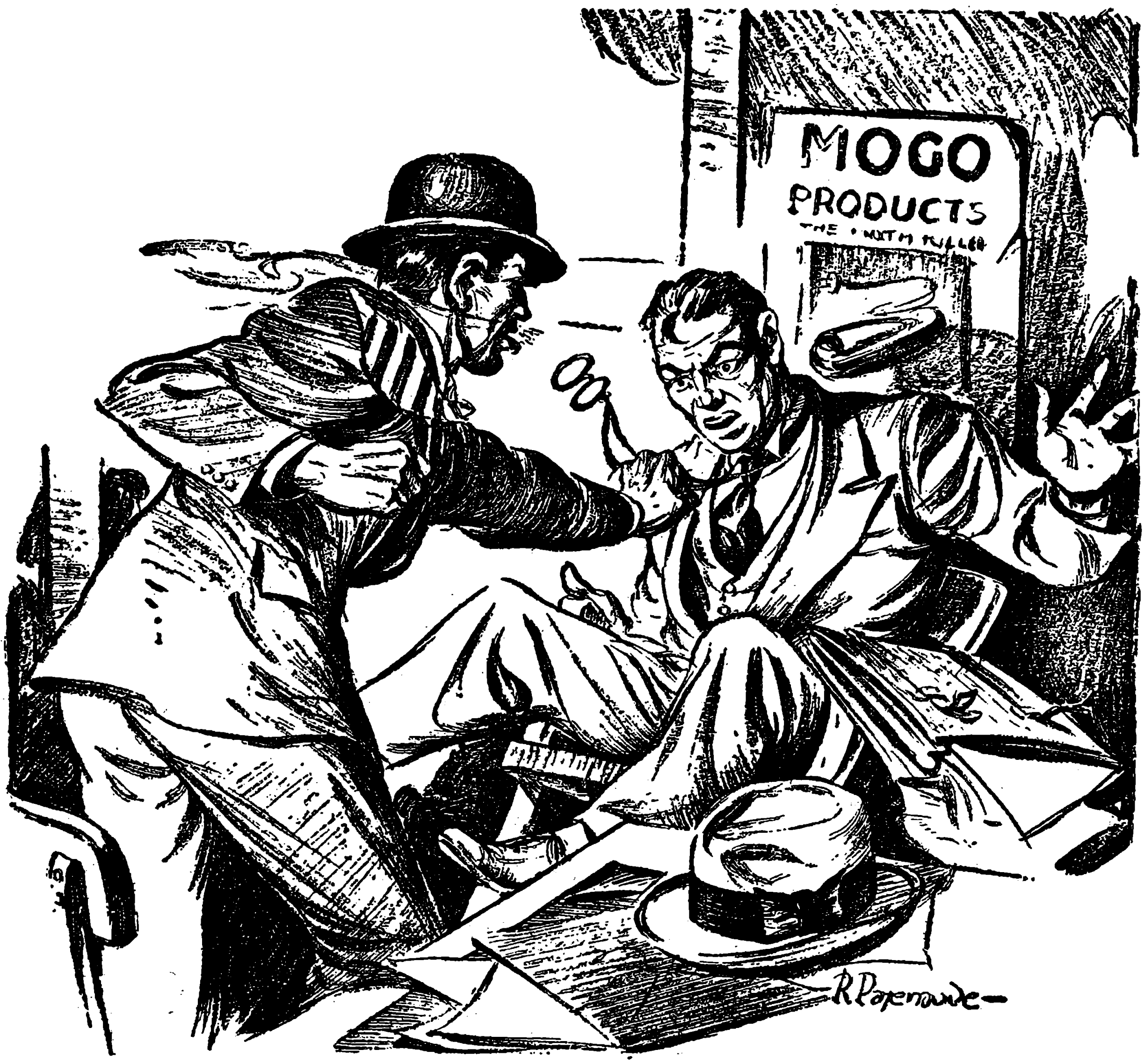
Tan felt a lump rise in his throat. He tried desperately not to cry.

Fletch cajoled him kindly. "Now, Tan, you had a smart idee. It's goin' to help me aplenty, 'cause them tracks fooled Mr. Hemington, it not taking considerable to hoodwink him! I'll be gettin' some guidin' business, all on accounta your idee to get my fishin' pole. So maybe I should jest kept my mouth shut and not got back at you this way. But then I figgered, why Tan don't want to be treated like no kid! He wants to l'arn how to trade so's the other party can't turn the moose sign back on 'im. Ain't that so, Tan?"

Tan shook his head mutely. He felt better, but he still didn't trust his voice.

Fletch dropped a hand on his shoulder and guided him out of the barn. "Ye'd better be gittin' back 'fore your folks start worryin' 'bout you, Tan. And I've been thinkin', I might reconsider takin' a small down payment on that pole."

THE END.



MOTH MURDERER

BY DON MacLAUCHLAN

• Handy never hesitated to turn a good dollar, ethically or otherwise.

From Handy Jacks' point of view things were in a terrible state. He was threatened with all sorts of trouble; he'd lost his most essential item of operation, a telephone; he'd been unable for weeks to employ his second great line of attack, the classified advertising columns; and finally he was without funds to operate his scheme through the mails.

"Who would hire you and what could you do?" he asked Hilly Raymer, his number one accomplice in all his promotional operations. Beyond the question was the implication that if Hilly could answer it intelligently, therein Handy might find a satisfactory reply for his own use.

"I can drive a car," Hilly replied, seriously.

"I can also drive a nail through a board," snapped Handy, "but is that any sign that I'm a carpenter."

"That's one thing I always wanted to do, be a carpenter," said Hilly.

"Aw, nuts," said Handy inexpressively.

Handy darted out of the office. It was a hot April afternoon. Unaccustomed to such heat after a recent last gasp of winter, New York was sleeping in its tracks. Handy Jacks walked across Forty-second Street to the swanky men's restaurant known as the Station Bar and swung through the bar to the dining room at the rear. Here affluent diners sat at a leisurely meal, engaged in pleasant but businesslike conversation.

"Mr. Jacks," the captain greeted. "Are you alone?"

"I'm expecting a guest," replied Handy, and was ushered to a table easily seen from the entrance of the place.

"Will this do, sir?"

"Nicely, Arnold, nicely," said Handy, taking the seat the captain of waiters pulled out for him.

"Very hot today, sir," said the waiter.

"Yes, it is," said Handy," so let's have something cooling and soothing for lunch. Starting with a frozen drink of some sort."

"A rum cocktail, sir?"

"I suppose," said Handy, "that will do."

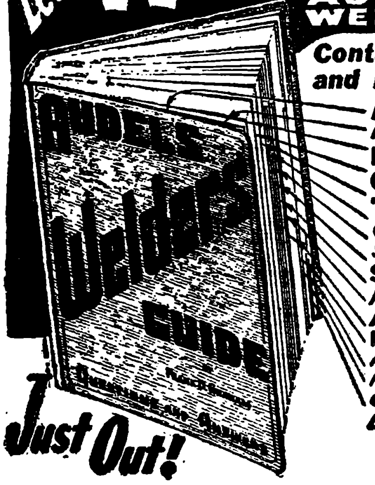
"What, rum? Why not a nice cold bottle of wine, Handy?"

Handy Jacks looked up from his menu and the waiter rushed around to pull out a chair for a tall, somewhat overbearing, yet pleasant-looking gentleman. It was the kindly look which

Any thrifty, well-groomed tar
Knows Thin Gillettes are best by far
For fast and easy shaves each time—
And yet four blades cost just a dime!
Precision made to fit your Gillette Razor exactly!
THIN Gillette BLADES
Gillette
4 for 10c
8 for 19c
The Thin Gillette Blade Is Produced By The Maker Of The Famous Gillette Blue Blade

Learn WELDING This Easy Way!

AUDELS NEW WELDERS GUIDE



Contains Important Facts and Essential Information!

WELDING METHODS
WELDERS
ELECTRIC
OXY-ACETYLENE
THERMIT
UNIONMELT
SHEET METAL
SPOT
PIPE
PRESSURE VESSELS
VARIOUS METALS
AIRPLANE
HARDENING-FACING
CUTTING
EYE PROTECTION

$1

Just Out!

Every Welder Should Own This New, Useful Book containing clear, concise, practical information, pointers and facts relating to modern practice in all Branches. Easy to read and understand—over 400 pages Fully Illustrated—flexible cover—pocket size—a Ready Reference that Answers Your Questions accurately—Money Back if not O.K. To get this assistance for yourself, order copy today.

THEO. AUDEL, Publishers, 49 W. 23rd St., New York

Please mail AUDELS WELDERS GUIDE (Price $1). If satisfactory, I will remit $1 on its safe arrival, otherwise I will return the book.

Name________________________________

Address______________________________

Occupation___________________________

Employed by_________________________ SS42

I DO HALF DAYS IRONING in 1 hour

Says Mrs. R. C. Shelley of Virginia.

WOMEN are amazed at easy, fast, cool ironing with the new Streamlined Diamond. Self-heating, instant heat control, triple pointed base, heat-proof rosewood handle. Rust-proof CHROMIUM finish for lifetime service. No tiring hot stovework or dangerous cords—Burns 96% AIR, only 4% kerosene (coal oil). It actually IRONS FAMILY WASHING for 1 CENT.

BURNS 96% AIR

30 DAYS HOME TRIAL!
Enjoy Diamond Ironing for a month at our risk. Write for full particulars of Trial offer!

Akron Lamp & Mfg. Co.
1005 Iron St., Akron, Ohio

AGENTS: $8.00, $10, $14 A DAY being made. Write at once.

Home-Study

Business Training

Your opportunity will never be bigger than your preparation. Prepare now and reap the rewards of early success. Free 64-Page Books Tell How. Write NOW for book you want, or mail coupon with your name, present position and address in margin today.

☐ Higher Accountancy
☐ Mod. Salesmanship
☐ Traffic Management
☐ Law: Degree of LL. B.
☐ Commercial Law
☐ Industrial Mgm't
☐ Business Mgm't
☐ Business Corres.
☐ Expert Bookkeeping
☐ C. P. A. Coaching
☐ Effective Speaking
☐ Stenotypy

LaSalle Extension University

Dept. 365-R A CORRESPONDENCE INSTITUTION Chicago

Handy said allowed even himself to be swindled by Mark Anniston. Anniston sat down almost before Handy recovered from his surprise. Then when he did he withheld his words, determined to stick this sworn enemy with a sizable luncheon check, if nothing else.

"I trust things are going well with you, Markus," said Handy, hoping that Anniston was starving. It was the first time he'd seen him since the debacle two years before in Miami when each had tried to cut the other's throat in large slices.

"What do you want? You know the position I'm in; so make it short, I'm expecting a guest."

"And I'm expecting the President of the United States," replied Anniston. "Don't worry about the check. I'll go for it, so eat hearty; and I'll offer a small proposition."

"For what?" asked Handy, "a rat trap?"

"Not quite. A moth trap!"

"A what?"

"A moth trap. I am the sole owner, manufacturer, inventor and sales distributor of the Mogo, a moth trap without an equal. This is just the time of the year that these pesky little insects burrow into milady's furs and my gentleman's winter wardrobe. My gadget, which retails at one dollar and seventy-five cents and which I offer to you for one dollar, is the greatest thing moth balls—"

"So what's the matter with moth balls—provided you have any clothes to save?"

"Nothing is the matter with moth balls," said Anniston. "In fact, we use moth balls. But instead of secreting them in the pockets and linings of garments, you simply place them in my Mogo, turn on the switch and moth fumes penetrate everything in the closet.

No moth can live in the atmosphere. Result—no moth holes."

Handy ordered his lunch without answering his one-time enemy. He was looking for a spot where Anniston might be planning to sucker him. That would be Anniston's game.

"What's the play?" he asked, cynically.

"It's simple," said Anniston, "but it's mine. I'll pay you well. But the deal is mine."

"What's the play?" Handy persisted.

"We set up local agents, making them take an allotted number in order to secure the agency," replied Anniston.

"So if there's any grief I get the beef. Nothing doing," said Handy.

"Beef?" From what? This is the first legitimate proposition you've been offered in ten years."

"Why are you offering it to me, then?" asked Handy, not without cause. Handy was one of those super salesmen who could sell rainbows. You didn't ordinarily go out looking for a fellow like Handy if your deal was certain and one hundred percent bona fide.

"Because," replied Anniston, convincingly, "this is one of those things where you make your money in a hurry or you don't make it. People are moth conscious for a month or two. Then the market is gone for a year. The Mogo Manufacturing Co. will have other items to take up the slack months. This is the starter, and I don't know a better man to start it. In short, that's why I'm after you."

HANDY was trying to believe Mark Anniston, but it took more trust than he possessed, especially since he'd known and associated with Anniston in previous deals. He thought that Anniston was the lowest operator in the field; the sort of a guy who shilled for a product and always dropped the firecracker in somebody's lap when it was about to explode.

Handy took in everything Anniston said and left himself doubting, reasonably, fifty percent of everything said. But even if only twenty-five percent of what Anniston was saying were true, that much would be much better than circumstances as they stood. He might eat for two months—and then? Well, then something might happen. It always did, didn't it?

"I'll be in the rest of the afternoon," said Anniston, "and you'll be surprised when you see the set-up."

Handy was prepared for a lavish office. There's a promoter's slogan that when you find a well-financed deal without much foundation you'll find it well appointed in plant and front. The Mogo Manufacturing Co. operated from the most ornate two-room suite that Handy Jacks had ever seen. Even he could not possibly have thought up such a layout. There were Brussels carpets on both office floors into which you seemed to sink to your knees; the furniture was hand carved and in the most modern vein. Oil paintings with shaded lights adorned the walls—which were stippled in a neutral tan. In one corner of the room a small door opened into a closet that secreted a complete bar. Handy had been speechless since he entered the place. When he found his erstwhile confederate, Hilly Raymer, sconced behind a highball glass in the bar, he was more than shocked.

"He found you," said Hilly.

"Did you try to keep my whereabouts a secret?" asked Handy.

"Handy," said Hilly, "this is a great deal. It's made to order for you. Mark told me to come here and wait for you."

"I'll give you a hundred dollars," said Anniston. "That'll hold you until you get started, and I'll pay you promptly on the first order you get. Here's the deal in a nutshell. I'll sell the machine to you for—"

Six bits and not a cent more," said Handy.

"Where do I come in?" asked Anniston.

"Worry about yourself," said Handy. "And I assume it won't be much of a worry because you're not beefing loud enough. But you've got to make shipments enough for me to get started."

"That's your stake," said Anniston, "and I'll ship C. O. D."

He called the girl from the outer office and directed her to bring in a file folder which she did. From it, Anniston took a handful of letters."

"Where are you going?" asked Anniston.

"How's upstate, Poughkeepsie, up the river?"

Anniston fished through the folder and came out with a handful of letters. "Here's everything in Westchester, Putnam, Duchess, and Columbus counties," he said.

"How do you want these guys sold, by county distributorship?" asked Handy.

"Let your conscience be your guide," said Anniston. He reached into his pocket and withdrew a roll of bills.

"I shall," said Handy.

HANDY and Hilly departed the luxurious surroundings of the Mogo Manufacturing Co. and went directly to Handy's headquarters and from the one-file cabinet, an archaic item of deep wooden drawers, the once natty Handy Jacks withdrew a suitcase of modest proportions and polished it with an oiled cloth. He then pored through the letters given him by Anniston and, after studying them for sometime, announced that they would leave at once for Poughkeepsie.

"Do you think that this contraption is as good as I do?" Hilly asked.

"Better," said Handy, without explaining.

"You've got an angle," said Hilly. His face broke into a wide grin. "That's all I want, to see you with an angle. Then I know we'll eat."

Handy and Hilly departed the following morning for the small upstate city and without much trouble found a presentable and pleasant "housekeeping apartment" on one of the tree-shaded streets just off Main Street. They then made a tour of inspection around the used-car lots of the city. Handy found exactly what he wanted for two hundred and fifty dollars and paid the man a ten-dollar deposit. He said he would pick up the car in a few days. Then he sought out a bank. He explained to the banker that he was looking for a light metal work manufacturer, a small man operating an independent shop who might be able to handle a rather large amount of small business. He was directed to one such man.

Hachman Schwartz proved to be an affable and capable old citizen who allowed that he could make anything small in metals that wasn't too complicated. Handy assured him the job he had for him was simple. Just a little metal cutting, sealing and punching. That and perhaps one-hand operation of insertion and the job would be finished.

"I don't want to talk about specifications, you know," said Handy. "I just wanted to look over your plant, perhaps take a sample or two of tin and then I can show you in a day or so what we are after. We feel that we can serve the community best by having our output manufacturers right in a locality where we can do business."

"If its metal I can do it," said Schwartz.

Outside, Handy said to Hilly: "Son, that's all I wanted to know."

IT took Handy several days to perfect what he was after. In the meanwhile, on the strength of some orders he took for Mogo's moth chaser, an office which he had established, a glib tongue and twenty more dollars, Handy had the automobile. Then he went into action.

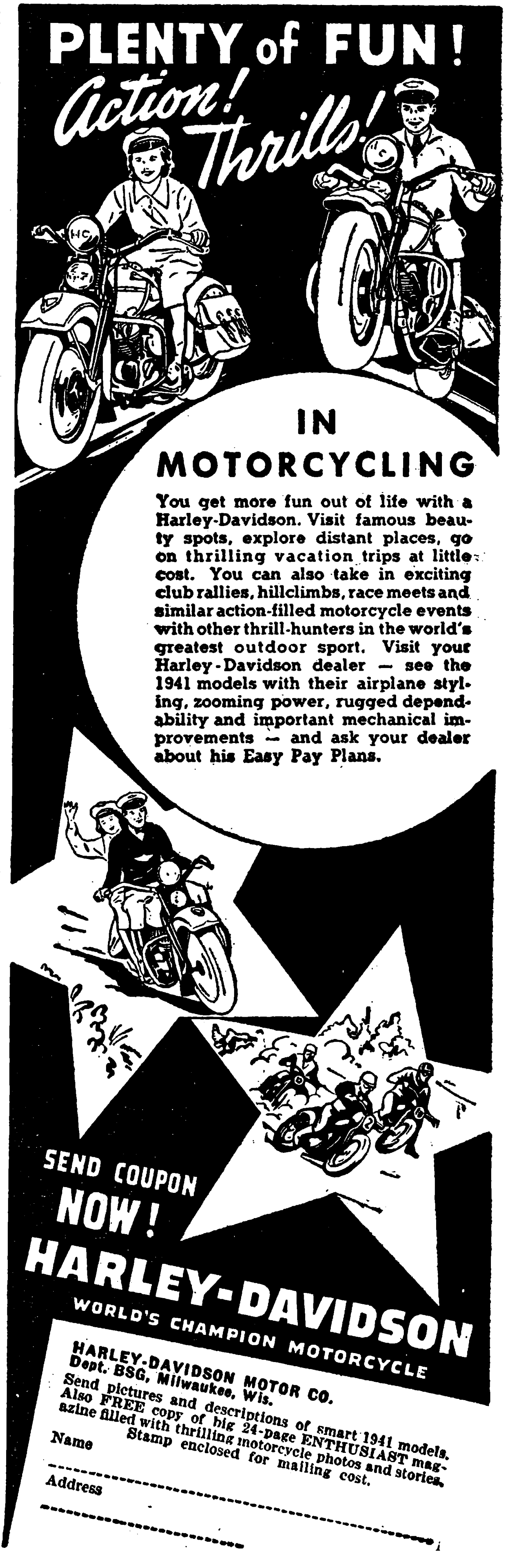
The office he rented was on a street floor, a store which had been a real-estate office. It was just off a main street and ran back through a small two-story building to an alley.

Handy and Hilly pumped the decrepit jellopy around the countryside tying up contracts for the Mogo product, and Handy worked long hours at night with plans, blueprints, tin shears and a sheet of tin. One night after midnight he waked up Hilly.

"I've got it, Hilly," he said. In his hand he had a long toyish-appearing tin thing from which dangled a light plug and cord. "This is it." He inserted the plug into a wall socket. From the perforation on the side of the long black piece of tin there emitted a small blast of air, but, nevertheless, a blast. "I've got this thing so that when the air gets hot and contacts the steam from the water, it causes an inrush of cool air on one side. When that strikes the hot air, out the two go together and carry with it the moth fumes better than the Mogo. And you can make it for about a dime."

"What do we use for money?"

"Credit," said Handy. "Our good friend, Anniston, will be receiving an-


PLENTY of FUN!
Action! Thrills!
IN MOTORCYCLING

You get more fun out of life with a Harley-Davidson. Visit famous beauty spots, explore distant places, go on thrilling vacation trips at little cost. You can also take in exciting club rallies, hillclimbs, race meets and similar action-filled motorcycle events with other thrill-hunters in the world's greatest outdoor sport. Visit your Harley-Davidson dealer — see the 1941 models with their airplane styling, zooming power, rugged dependability and important mechanical improvements — and ask your dealer about his Easy Pay Plans.

SEND COUPON NOW!

HARLEY-DAVIDSON
WORLD'S CHAMPION MOTORCYCLE

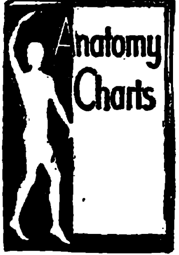
HARLEY-DAVIDSON MOTOR CO.
Dept. BSG, Milwaukee, Wis.
Send pictures and descriptions of smart 1941 models. Also FREE copy of big 24-page ENTHUSIAST magazine filled with thrilling motorcycle photos and stories. Stamp enclosed for mailing cost.

Name --
Address --

Learn this Profitable Profession

in 90 Days at Home

Hundreds of men and women of all ages 18-50 make $10.00 to $20.00 in a single day giving scientific Swedish Massage and Hydro-Therapy treatments. There is a big demand from Hospitals, Sanitariums, Clubs, Doctors and private patients as well as opportunities for establishing your own office.
Learn this interesting money-making profession in your own home by mail, through our home study course. Same instructors as in our NATIONALLY KNOWN resident school. A diploma is awarded upon completion of the course. Course can be completed in 3 to 4 months. High School training is not necessary. Many earn big money while learning.



Anatomy Charts & Booklet FREE

Enroll now and we will include uniform coat, medical dictionary, patented reducing roller and Hydro-Therapy supplies without extra cost. The reducing course alone may be worth many times the modest tuition fee.

Send coupon now for Anatomy Charts and booklet containing photographs and letters from successful graduates. These will all be sent postpaid—FREE.

THE College of Swedish Massage
Dept. 894, 30 E. Adams St., Chicago.
You may send me FREE and postpaid, Anatomy Charts, booklet containing photographs and letters from graduates, and complete details of your offer.

Name
Address
City State

High School at Home

Many Finish in 2 Years

Go as rapidly as your time and abilities permit. Equivalent to resident school work—prepares for entrance to college. Standard H. S. texts supplied. Diplomas awarded. Credit for H. S. subjects already completed. *Single subjects if desired.* Free Bulletin on request.
American School, Dept. H-37, Drexel at 58th, Chicago

LEARN TO SHOOT STRAIGHT WITH BENJAMIN
Made in U. S. A.

For Target—Small Game—Camping. Guaranteed—Accurate—Practical—Economical—Safe—Clean—Quiet. Adjustable Force—Amazing Maximum Velocity. No Smoke or Fumes. Bolt Action—Hammer Fire—Hair Trigger—Safety Lock—Hand Pump. Single Shot BB with 1 lb. shot $8.50; Single Shot cal. 177 or 22 rifled—with 500 pellets $10.00; BB 8-Shot with 1 lb. shot $10.00; Holster $2.00. Also a complete line of Benjamin Genuine Compressed Air Rifles for BB and cal. 177 or 22. No license required from dealer or factory. Write Today for complete specifications and free targets.
BENJAMIN AIR RIFLE CO. 883 Marion St. St. Louis, Mo., U. S. A.

Law!

LEARN AT HOME

Are you adult, alert, ambitious, willing to study? Investigate LAW! We guide you step by step—furnish all texts, including 14-volume Law Library. Training prepared by leading law professors and given by members of bar. Degree of LL.B. conferred. Low cost, easy terms. Send NOW for Free, 48-page "Law Training for Leadership."
LASALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY, Dept. 365-L Chicago
A CORRESPONDENCE INSTITUTION

other order tomorrow and that will be the last he'll get."

Handy never worked harder. He covered the countryside selling the Mogo product and his own which he called the Handy Moth Murderer.

During the intervening weeks, Handy had worked on his process and he'd even paid Schwartz seventy-five dollars for equipment and that hurt because it was a full commission check. But Schwartz made the corrections with new dies and then one day he was ready to go into mass production. Actually, the machine that Handy assembled was nothing more than some punched tin, fitted together to look like a fat candy bar.

But he was certain it would work; work sufficiently for him to sell the four thousand he had made. He would get a distributor ready to accept the Mogo line and then he would offer him the cheaper Moth Murderer, which Handy could give the distributor for sixty cents—a nice margin of profit since he only paid Schwartz twenty cents for them. The dealer could sell them for less than half of the Mogo item and still make a fancy profit.

All during the manufacturing process he kept lining up customers for four thousand Moth Murderers. That was the number which Schwartz had agreed to make on credit; and Handy realized that the number was the final count of Moth Murderers which would ever be produced!

Once his brain child was on the market, he wasn't certain there would be any more customers!

HANDY was whistling going up the hall to his office. It was, for his operations, a perfect set-up. He now lived and worked right on the premises. Hilly was installed in the same quarters and there was a garage out back where the jellopy was housed for safe keeping, though who would have designs on it was a matter beyond the scope of Handy. If he thought anybody had such hope for his means of transportation he would have insured it against theft and made the crime a cinch to perpetrate. He swung open the door and was greeted by the sight of a prim man wearing horn rim glasses on a black ribbon. He looked like a lawyer; and to Handy's greater consternation he looked like a good lawyer. Moreover, a lawyer who acted instead of talked.

"Are you Mr. Handy Jacks?" he asked, pointedly.

"That's me," said Handy, "what can I do for you?"

"I represent the Mogo Manufacturing Co.," he said, looking up from a paper, a legal paper, he was scanning, "and I have come to ask your opinion of this before we proceed."

He handed Handy the document. He read it and discovered it was a plea for a permanent injuction preventing the Handy Moth Murderer Co. from manufacturing the article which they were making and further, under a separate plea, asked that Handy be restrained from distributing his item as an infringement on Mogo, setting forth that he was a notorious promoter without a moment's mechanical inclination behind him in his life; furthermore that the Mogo Manufacturing Co. had in good faith sent him to Poughkeepsie as a sales agent only to have him steal their patents—applied for and protected—and manufacture his own machine from their secret process and, moreover, to sell this basely copied and inferior item to the customers that he had been sent forth to solicit in the name of Mogo. This was fraud! It was not ethical, honest or sporting.

"Where do we go from here?" asked Handy.

"Unless you withdraw this imitation moth stench bomb, you will be on your way to court in five minutes," said the lawyer.

Handy thought of the orders he had lined up. There were distributors ready to take on four thousand of the things. That meant sixteen hundred dollars profit to him and sixteen hundred dollars was manna from heaven. He'd been stretching the small commission he'd got from Anniston to a point where it was snapping. Today was the day; and the week was the getaway week—back to New York with a bank roll with which he could again start an enterprise that would be worthy of his classic efforts.

Here was Schwartz, due any minute with the delivery of the first batch of one thousand of the machines; and he had to stand open-mouthed, listening to the lawyer man—evidently from New York—talk him out of that first four-hundred-dollar touch.

The lawyer sat down. "If you are planning to try to talk me out of this injunction," he said, "you are wasting your time. My instructions are clear."

"What are your instructions?"

"To give you two chances. To withdraw the item as it stands, or to turn over your sales to Mogo for a stipulated sum," he said, "and if you refuse either of these I am to proceed with these injunction efforts, a temporary writ which will be issued promptly will be served on both you and Schwartz, prohibiting him from releasing this infringed item he has manufactured to you. In the event he does he is liable to contempt of the Federal court."

"That's a hard bargain that Anniston is driving," said Handy. "What's his price?"

"Four hundred dollars."

Handy gasped, audibly. He had his "out" already lined up. Time was precious, however. Handy never lacked for avenues of action when fresh money was within his reach.

"Where would I get the four hundred from? Anniston didn't say that, did he?"

"As a matter of fact, Mr. Anniston gave me a check, a certified check drawn to your order. Turn over the machines and the verified orders to me and the check will be yours."

"Just a minute, I'll have to confer about this with my partner," said Handy. "Please step up to my office." Once there, before the lawyer could protest, he went into the room just behind the partition and stepped back so the lawyer couldn't see him but could hear him. "Hilly, what can I do? I know you are stuck." While he was saying this he was going through a pantomime of driving a car and writing on a card: "Get stuff out of Schwartz; bring here in garage." Then the audible conversation went on: "I know you have worked hard; but the best I can do is split this holdup with you. You can't expect me to do more, and there's nothing we can do. Anniston's got us."

"Anything you do is all right with me, Handy," said Hilly. "I leave that to you, though, of course, I'm very disappointed."

Handy came back into the front part of the office. "And you say that Anniston is ready to take over our stock as well as our orders and fill 'em. What about Schwartz?" he asked.

"There's no provision for Schwartz here," said the lawyer. "Mr. Anniston figures that you are getting a good enough break on the four-thousand order—"

"So he even knows how many I'm having made!"

"Certainly," said the lawyer, coldly. "Anyway, he believes that you will turn the orders over to him very peacefully and the stock, too, because he feels that publicity would be unpleasant for you."

"And you think *he* can stand it?"

"That is something in which I'm not interested," the lawyer said. "Now if you will show me these orders and permit me to verify them?"

Handy went through his desk. He raked through papers, writing on some, laying others to one side. The process took perhaps fifteen minutes.

"You are not trying to waste time for some purpose, are you? Because, if you are, you can save time. We are not interested in those things that Schwartz made; we'll fill these with our own goods. All we want is the list."

"What are you trying to pull?"

"You've wasted my time for as long as I care to have it wasted," said the lawyer. He drew a pocket handkerchief from his breast pocket. Before he could get to his feet, Handy was across the desk and knocked the lawyer over. He skirted the partition and was through the hall toward the back just as the office door to the street opened and a loud voice yelled: "Where is he?"

"He went through that hall," he heard the lawyer answer.

Handy ducked into a broom closet at the end of the hall and hoped that Hilly wouldn't be back yet. The men thumped through the door to the backyard and after several minutes they returned. He opened the door on a slit and heard nothing up the hall. He eased himself out of the closet and heard the lawyer and two other voices, at least, arguing.

He realized quickly that the lawyer

was on the telephone, probably calling New York and Anniston. There was one chance for him. He bolted out into the backyard and up the alley. At the street entrance to the alley he stopped Hilly who was driving into the place. He jumped into the car.

"Boy," Hilly said, "what a session. Schwartz was yelling murder for taking these out without his forty bucks, but the guy got frightened when I told him that he might not get his dough at all and might get slugged if he didn't get them out."

"Slugged? How'd you make him believe that?"

"I told him some tough mugs from New York was here muscling in on our racket and that they couldn't scare us but they might scare him. Best thing for him to do was to get the stuff out of his place."

"What a nice fellow you are. Muscling in. Rackets. Listen, that joint of ours will be overrun by cops in ten minutes. Let's get around to those customers."

HANDY needed no written list of sales orders. He had dealt with distributors and he had sold the entire four thousand to ten or twelve men. He could write down the list from his memory, and this he did. They covered the territory and unloaded their wares and collected their funds.

Handy drove back to the office. Outside the office, Handy ran smack into the arms of a heavy-set man.

"You Handy Jacks?" he asked.

"He's inside," said Handy.

"That ain't the way I heerd it," said the man. "Come on with me."

It took Handy Jacks the better part of a week to get himself straightened out with the police, and when he did, he had little more than his car fare back to New York. Two days after he arrived in town, he went to the Station Bar for lunch. The captain took him to a seat from which he could view the front of the bar. He ordered a cool drink and a cool salad.

"Why not a nice planter's punch, Handy?"

Without looking up, Handy knew the voice.

"Who did it?" asked Handy.

"Did what?" asked Mark Anniston, innocently.

"Sold those musk balls to the old guy for moth balls," Handy said.

"Oh, that."

"Yeah, that! If it hadn't been for that, I'd have made a clean getaway with that sixteen hundred."

"That was one of the precautions I took," said Anniston. "I convinced Schwartz that I had a scented moth ball which would surprise you. In his excitement he forgot to tell Hilly. Then the heat of the unit broke the scented musk balls and the breeze from the fan made the Moth Murderer a stench bomb for fair. It was only a matter of hours, I knew, before the police would be after you."

"You took that precaution, too, I suppose?" asked Handy.

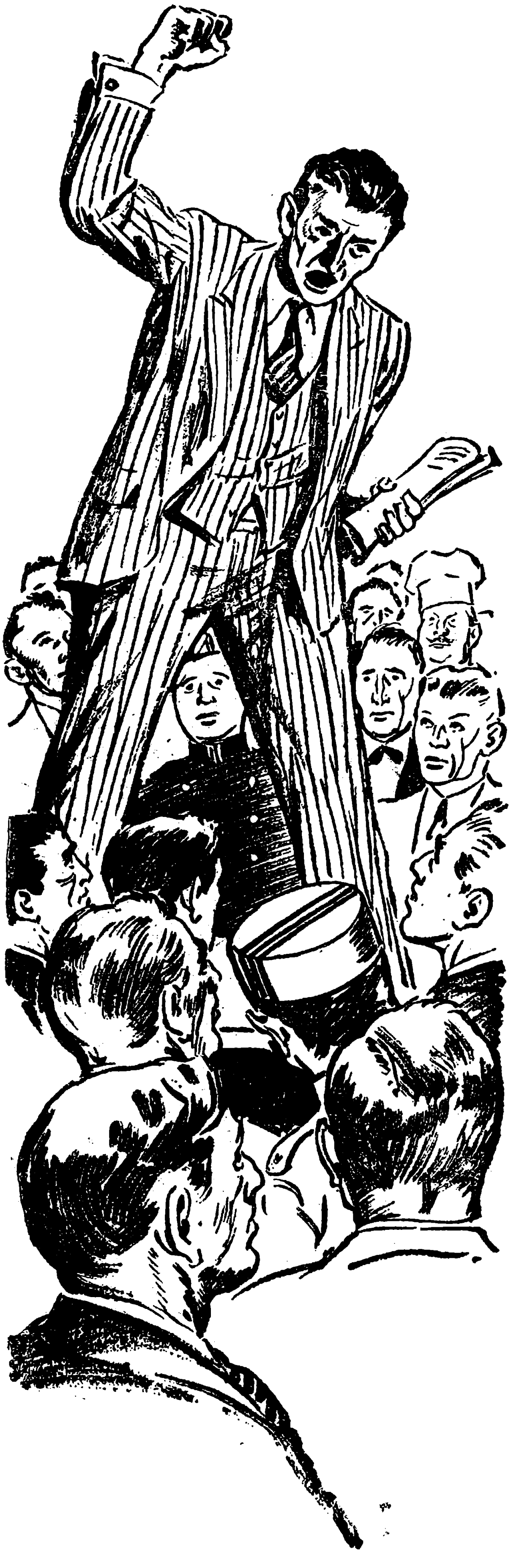
"Naturally. You might be interested to know that I sold our patented process for eliminating odors to all the sufferers from your brain storm."

"And I get seventy five bucks out of it?" asked Handy.

"Well, you've had a lot of experience," said Anniston, "and you've also learned a good lesson. Don't go near the flame on the wings of a moth killer."

"Nuts!" said Handy.

THE END



White Elephant Manor

BY ROSS RUSSELL

• A ghostly hotel staff greeted the undertakers.

"It is fortune knocking!" said Hymie Goldfarb ecstatically. "But knocking!"

"Ah," said his brother-in-law, Cody McLarnin, "but it's a terrible gamble!"

"A gamble?" repeated Goldfarb in an injured tone. "So you wouldn't gamble a measly twenty thousand coconuts to make maybe millions?"

"Measly twenty thousand!" cried his brother-in-law. "Did you say *measly,* Goldfarb?"

"Look!" shouted Goldfarb. "At your feet ain't I laying a fortune?" Goldfarb began waving his arms violently in the general direction of the somewhat picturesque scene displayed at their feet. They were standing on the edge of a sandy promontory overlooking the east coast of Florida. Below, occupying a palm-studded key connected with the mainland by means of a causeway, lay a boarded-up resort hotel surrounded by a number of lesser buildings, all rather dilapidated by action of the climate.

"Observe!" Goldfarb continued. "Two hundred rooms, with baths even, anyway showers. Dining hall. Kitchen. Bar. Swimming pool. Didn't it cost almost a million?"

"During the Florida land boom, perhaps," McLarnin admitted. Fearsome that the windmill motion of Goldfarb's gesticulating upset his balance, McLarnin pulled him to a spot of safety, and went on: "That was sixteen years ago. The property is considerably the worse for wear!"

"O. K.!" Goldfarb said. "So we spend a few grand, fix it up!" Goldfarb waved again.

"*We* spend?" demanded McLarnin. "See here, Goldfarb, did you wire me to come down here and look the proposition over with a thought to *my* putting up the capital? If—"

"Take it easy!" cautioned Goldfarb. "It ain't so good for your blood pressure, not to mention bellicose veins. You might pop an artery! Now this proposition is simplicity itself. There ain't nothing but what you can't see for yourself. Already we have made an inspection of the property."

"I still don't like the name," McLarnin asserted. "White Elephant Manor. There's a forebodin' sound to it!"

"A fragment of the imagination!" Goldfarb said. "What is there wrong with the property?"

"With the property itself—nothing," admitted McLarnin. "But the property may contain a thousand pitfalls. For example—liens, second mortgages and other matters your un-legal mind has no smattering of!"

"All right—so you're a lawyer. I hope you ain't gonna let none of these Cracker shysters outsmart you, McLarnin. That is exactly the point I'm coming to. Now that we have inspected the property, nothing remains but we inspect the title and papers to same, together with books of operation left by the last firm. Then if you ain't satisfied, the deal is off and nobody loses anything."

"Goldfarb, I'm a busy man. If you've

4 big fields
of OPPORTUNITY for YOU

1. RADIO-TELEVISION
2. DIESEL-AUTO
3. AIRCRAFT
4. ELECTRICITY

Qualify for TOP-PAY JOBS

Take Your Choice

You can completely master any of these 4 big pay trades and increase your present pay by enrolling with National Schools—oldest and largest in the West.

TRAINING PLAN TIME-TESTED

Flexible training plan geared to needs of ambitious men. Complete, practical, pre-tested training method offered to you. Graduates all over America are profiting by National Schools' famous plan of training. Highly endorsed by Leaders of Industry.

RADIO training, all branches, repair, service, broadcasting, sound, public address, studio technique, television, etc.

DIESEL and Gas Engine instruction, ignition, carburetion, repair, operation, etc.

AIRCRAFT training in sheet metal construction, fabrication, jig work, forming, bench work, etc.

ELECTRICITY, wiring, line work, motors, installation, etc.

GET DETAILS TODAY

Any man with average mechanical ability can now become trained. A new future opened for you, regardless of your present position in life. Mail coupon right now.

NATIONAL SCHOOLS
LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

MAIL COUPON FOR FREE LITERATURE

National Schools, Dept. 3-BS
4000 So. Figueroa St., Los Angeles, Calif.
Mail free literature. No obligation.
NAME________________AGE______
ADDRESS______________________
CITY________________STATE______

CHECK COURSE YOU WANT
☐ *Radio*
☐ *Diesel*
☐ *Aircraft*
☐ *Electricity*

JUST OUT!
EVERY RADIO MECHANIC —Service Man and Student Needs "Audels Radiomans Guide" Just Out! The whole subject of Modern Radio covering the Basic Principles — Construction and Operation — Service — Repairs — Troubles — All Easily Understood Over 750 Pages. 400 Illustrations. Parts and Diagrams — LATE TELEVISION DATA — Valuable for REFERENCE AND HOME STUDY
RADIO
$4 To get this practical information in handy form for yourself just fill in and mail coupon today.
COMPLETE • PAY ONLY $1 A MONTH! ←
THEO. AUDEL & CO., Publishers, 49 W. 23rd STREET, N. Y.
Mail AUDELS NEW RADIOMANS GUIDE for free examination. If O. K. I will send you $1 in 7 days; then remit $1 monthly until price of $4 is paid. Otherwise, I will return it.
Name
Address
Occupation
Reference SS42

AGENTS SELL NYLON HOSE AND GIVE SILK HOSE ½ PRICE IN Combination Order
EXTRA HOSE FOR YOUR PERSONAL USE SENT WITH LARGE OUTFIT
WEAR HOSE WE FURNISH
Sell Nylon Hose, give Silk Hose half price in combination order. Women crazy over Nylon. Agents coining money with sensational half price combination offer. Supply silk hose replacement guaranteed 4 to 8 months, depending on quantity. Guaranteed by Good Housekeeping as advertised therein. New cars given producers. Look at these exceptional earnings. Onita West, $39.10 first week; Emma Wall, $47.87 first week. Rush name and hose size; free confidential facts.
WILKNIT HOSIERY CO., Midway, 16-B3, Greenfield, Ohio

LATEST SCIENTIFIC CRIME DETECTION METHODS
Latest Information on Finger Printing, Fire Arms Identification, Police Photography, Secret Service Methods
Read This Amazing Book
30 DAYS FREE
Explains with real cases latest methods of Scientific Crime Detection—finger printing—firearms identification—police photography. Takes you on the inside. Informative—exciting—valuable. Read 30 days free—then send only a dollar if you want to keep this amazing book. Your age must be stated.
T. G. Cooke, Dept. 2773, 1920 Sunnyside Ave., Chicago

brought me fifteen hundred miles on a wild-goose chase—"

Goldfarb shrugged eloquently. "Well, what could be any nicer this time of year than a vacation in Florida?" he countered.

"A vacation at my own expense!" McLarnin snapped. "Let's go and see those papers!"

Hymie obligingly stepped into the roadster rented for the occasion and they drove back toward town. He had not been married three years to Cody McLarnin's sister for nothing. During that period he had made an intensive study of the elder McLarnin's moods and humors and felt quite sure the short-temperedness of the moment masked a gnawing avarice. After all, resort hotels, complete in every detail, were not to be picked up for a few cents on the dollar every day, even in tarnished condition.

The White Elephant layout struck Hymie as a natural. The plant had been operated at a meager profit the season before. Goldfarb had seen the books. But the owners, apparently lacking capital, had been content to clear out without trying to hold on to their equity.

In the first place, Goldfarb felt sure capable management, his own contribution to the scheme, could produce more than a bare profit this season. In fact, he saw no reason why the season could not practically pay off their investment, leaving them with the hotel layout clear and ready for a pyramiding of investment in the years to come. It was the chance of a lifetime. He kept reminding the dour Mr. McLarnin of this on the ride back to town.

There, an entire afternoon was spent at the office of the real-estate concern offering the property for sale. A licensed auditor vouched for and explained the books of the previous owners to McLarnin. Following that, McLarnin made an intensive search of the various papers of title. It was dark when they returned to their hotel. McLarnin could find no fault with the deal.

"No, there ain't nothing fishy!" Goldfarb insisted. "Florida is full of such opportunities. It is the land of opportunity. So?"

"I can't decide yet," McLarnin said. "Don't bother me with your importunities!"

"Opportunities!" Goldfarb corrected.

A DAY passed. Two. McLarnin demanded to be driven to the premises once more and made a thorough inspection of certain parts of the old resort, notably the convention hall. The visit was interlarded with frequent long-distance telephone calls to Chicago, McLarnin's native city. The real-estate agent muttered darkly of an offer from a rival investment pool. McLarnin asked interminable questions. Goldfarb was on tenterhooks.

"One thing is certain," Hymie consoled himself. "Would he be taking all this time if he wasn't hot on the deal?" That seemed a reasonable supposition. But meanwhile, he himself was practically running a fever. He did his best to keep in countenance and reassure the realtor and other parties who had begun to think McLarnin had grown sour on the deal. "Just give him time!" Goldfarb pleaded.

"Time is of the essence," the realtor reminded.

Another day passed. Once again they drove to White Elephant Manor and again McLarnin inspected the convention hall. Upon their return to town a call from Cody McLarnin's brother, Thomasheen, an officer of an undertakers' union of some sort, awaited them. When Cody finished burning up thirty dollars' worth of time and emerged from the booth, his long face wore a determined expression.

"Faith," said Cody. "And we'll buy the Manor intact!"

"Have you got the money?" Goldfarb inquired practically.

"The money," McLarnin answered, "*and* the convention!"

"Convention?"

"I should hope so. No, Goldfarb, my brother and I aren't going into this deal blind. Thomasheen has just secured the Manor for the 1941 convention of the National Embalmers' Association. Two hundred delegates, Goldfarb! Ten days! Suppose each delegate spends only two hundred dollars! Think of it! We'll have the cursed thing paid for before the end of the first season!"

Goldfarb's eyes bugged. The Irish, he decided, had unpublicized talents for business. "And where do I come in?" he demanded indignantly.

"Never fear, Goldfarb!" McLarnin said. "The management of the Manor shall be yours exclusively. Fail on that job and we all crash! Succeed, and a reasonable interest in the venture is yours. Everything depends upon the convention. Understand that!"

"And when does this embalmers' convention arrive?"

"Two weeks from today. There's no time to lose!"

"You said it!" exclaimed Goldfarb.

NO doubt remained of that after the feverish activities of the following two days. McLarnin posted the purchase price in the local Bay City bank. The deeds were transferred. Instantly McLarnin and Goldfarb, operating from headquarters in the Manor, began attacking the thousand details incumbent upon opening the resort to the public, or anyway the embalmers.

It required one day to arrange for installation of utilities, another to have the buildings unboarded. A hastily organized grounds crew was set to work. Painters, plasterers, carpenters, gardeners, landscapers—arrived in droves. The shambles was something fantastic. A week passed. Finally order and even beauty began to put in an appearance.

"Now!" said McLarnin. "I do think the place is beginnin' to look like something, after all. How is it with your end, Goldfarb?"

"Perfect!" Goldfarb recapitulated the check of linen, serviceware and room furnishings laboriously completed by his handful of assistants.

"Capital! Then nothing remains but to arrange for provisions, not forgetting adequate supplies of liquid stock, of which the embalming gentlemen are uncommonly fond, and the service staff."

It was the latter problem that gave them their first hint of menace overhanging White Elephant Manor. To bargain for foodstuffs and liquid provender with cash was simplicity itself. But the commodity of labor was quite another matter.

"It's like this," a black-haired man named Nicoletti explained in the offices of the union at Bay City. "For some years Florida has been the last holdout of scab labor in the country. An employer's market has enabled them to exploit labor in notorious fashion. My union means to organize hotel workers in the State this season and once and for all, put a stop to sweatshop wages and impossible conditions!" Mr. Nicoletti transfixed Hymie Goldfarb with a fierce glare.

"I ain't no bloated Plutarch!" protested Goldfarb. "We're willing to be reasonable. How much we gotta pay?"

"Here's the scale for all classes of resort labor, just approved by national headquarters." Nicoletti pushed at them a paper covered with many columns of figures.

"Fifty cents an hour for common unskilled!" Cody McLarnin shouted with indignation.

"That ain't so high, is it?" Goldfarb inquired.

"High? It'll ruin us!" McLarnin said. Hastily he pulled out some notes jotted down from the operating costs of the previous owners of White Elephant Manor. "Hell, they paid fifteen and twenty cents an hour last year!"

Nicoletti looked distressed. "Gentlemen, yours is not the first protest I have heard. It seems to have been common practice for out-of-State capital to take over hotels here and operate them for the season—then skip out with their profits, often leaving the local merchants, financiers, and even utility concerns holding the well-known bag. The profits, I might say, were possible due to callous exploitation of labor. Gentlemen, those days are gone forever in Florida. The scale you see before you shall be paid—or, I venture to predict, your hotel won't open this season."

"Preposterous!" exclaimed McLarnin.

Goldfarb tried to remonstrate but McLarnin left the office in high dudgeon. Together they spent a day and a half in a rather dismal attempt to round up some sort of a skeleton staff. It was impossible. The union organizers appeared to have things well under control. McLarnin attempted to carry on long-distance negotiations with employment agencies in Atlanta, New Orleans, New York. Each time he met with the same results—any number of employees available—at standard wages.

"Then the whole deal's off!" McLarnin decided.

This statement, Goldfarb ascribed to weakness and despair. "We can't do that!" he pointed out. "You'll drop four-five grand on repairs and investment turnover. We ain't licked yet. Lemme talk to this Nicoletti ginzo again!" Goldfarb was humming with confidence now. He liked this show of weakness on McLarnin's part. He could see himself taking over. Optimism, not to mention ambition, swelled mightily in his pigeon breast.

"Now, look, pal," he telephoned Nicoletti. "Let's be reasonable. All the cards on the table. We got a hotel. You got guys to work. We wanna get together. If we don't open the hotel we drop dough, which we can't afford. On the other hand, we don't know whether we can afford to pay your scale or not. It's pretty steep. Better than double last year's handouts."

"What are you driving at?" Nicoletti inquired.

"This, pal," Goldfarb said, growing more confidential. "If the joint stays dark, maybe two-three hunnerd guys don't work this season—right?"

"That's neither here nor there!" the union representative snapped. "I'll not be cut down?"

"Who's trying?" demanded Goldfarb. "Here's my proposition. Supply us with help and appoint an auditor. The auditor keeps track of every dollar that the joint grosses. At the end of a certain period we draw up a total, deduct operating expenses, and divide the rest."

"Fantastic!"

"No, it ain't!" said Goldfarb gruffly. "It's co-operative, that's what it is! Look, how much would you set as a reasonable percentage to cover capital

Speedline Corona Silent Model

CORONA

THE PORTABLE WITH THE OUTSTANDING FEATURES

FLOATING SHIFT—*speeds up work, saves your energy.* SPEED BOOSTER—*gives lightning action.* TOUCH SELECTOR—*adjust keys to your own touch.* ALL AROUND FRAME—*Coronas are built to take it.*

See your dealer for free home trial.

L C SMITH & CORONA TYPEWRITERS INC
Desk 3, 707 E. Washington St., Syracuse, N. Y.
I'm thinking of buying a Corona. Please send me free illustrated booklet.

*Name*____________________

*Address*____________________

*City*____________ *State*__________

AUDELS Carpenters and Builders Guides 4 vols. $6

AUDELS CARPENTERS AND BUILDERS GUIDE 1 — TOOLS STEEL SQUARE SAW FILING JOINERY FURNITURE
AUDELS CARPENTERS AND BUILDERS GUIDE 2 — BUILDERS MATHEMATICS DRAWING PLANS SPECIFICATIONS ESTIMATES
AUDELS CARPENTERS AND BUILDERS GUIDE 3 — HOUSE AND ROOF FRAMING LAYING OUT FOUNDATIONS
AUDELS CARPENTERS AND BUILDERS GUIDE 4 — DOORS WINDOWS STAIR BUILDING MILL WORK PAINTING

Inside Trade Information for Carpenters, Builders, Joiners, Building Mechanics and all Woodworkers. These Guides give you the short-cut instructions that you want—including new methods, ideas, solutions, plans, systems and money saving suggestions. An easy progressive course for the apprentice and student. A practical daily helper and Quick Reference for the master worker. Carpenters everywhere are using these Guides as a Helping Hand to Easier Work, Better Work and Better Pay. To get this assistance for yourself, simply fill in and mail the FREE COUPON below.

Inside Trade Information On:

How to use the steel square—How to file and set saws—How to build furniture—How to use a mitre box—How to use the chalk line—How to use rules and scales—How to make joints—Carpenters arithmetic—Solving mensuration problems—Estimating strength of timbers—How to set girders and sills—How to frame houses and roofs—How to estimate costs—How to build houses, barns, garages, bungalows, etc.—How to read and draw plans—Drawing up specifications—How to excavate—How to use settings 12, 13 and 17 on the steel square—How to build hoists and scaffolds—skylights—How to build stairs—How to put on interior trim—How to hang doors—How to lath—lay floors—How to paint

THEO. AUDEL & CO., 49 W. 23rd St., New York City

Mail Audels Carpenters and Builders Guides, 4 vols., on 7 days' free trial. If O.K. I will remit $1 in 7 days, and $1 monthly until $6 is paid. Otherwise I will return them. No obligation unless I am satisfied.

Name..

Address..

Occupation..

Reference.. SS42

FREE! 136 PAGE BOOK ON FISHING

NEW!
PEACH-ORENO
1941 Fish getter Ask any dealer

ALL NEW! 1941 edition "Fishing What Tackle and When." Bait and fly casting lessons. New angling hints. Identifies fish species in color. New tackle items. *Free! A postal gets it!*

SOUTH BEND BAIT CO.
602 High St., South Bend, Ind.

SOUTH BEND

ANY PHOTO ENLARGED

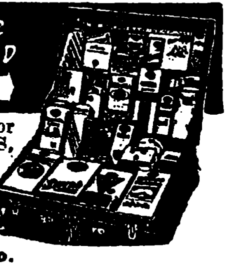
Size 8 x 10 inches or smaller if desired. Same price for full length or bust form, groups, landscapes, pet animals, etc., or enlargements of any **part** of group picture. Safe **return** of original photo guaranteed.

47c
3 for $1.00

SEND NO MONEY Just mail photo or snapshot (anysize) and within a week you will receive your beautiful enlargement, guaranteed fadeless. Pay postman 47c plus postage—or send 49c with order and we pay postage. Big 16x20-inch enlargement sent C.O.D. 78c plus postage or send 80c and we pay postage. Take advantage of this amazing offer now. Send your photos today. Specify size wanted.

STANDARD ART STUDIOS, 113 S. Jefferson St., Dept. 771-C, Chicago

FREE! $6.00 Full Size FOOD & HOUSEHOLD PRODUCT ASST.



SEND NO MONEY! Rush name and address for big Assortment of FOODS, GROCERIES, SOAPS, ETC.,—full size packages, worth $6.00. Yours ABSOLUTELY FREE! Show these products to friends, neighbors. Take orders for sensational values, more than 200 quality products used in every home. Earn big profits, full or spare time. No experience necessary. Write for FREE $6.00 Assortment of Products NOW. ZANOL, 3707 Monmouth, Cincinnati, Ohio.

BECOME AN EXPERT
BOOKKEEPER

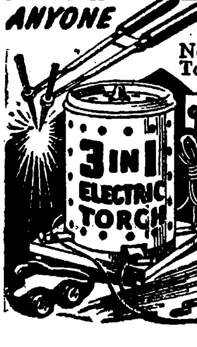
New, *better* bookkeeping opportunities opening every day. Jobs that pay well—and lead to still better jobs. We train you to get them—and keep them! Previous training not necessary. C.P.A. instructors cover everything from the ground up. Inexpensive. Write for free book and special terms. No obligation. Address:

LaSalle Extension University, Dept. 365-H Chicago, Ill.
A Correspondence Institution

Did "Diamond Jim" Have Stomach Acid Pains?

It is hardly likely that Diamond Jim Brady could have eaten so voraciously if he suffered after-eating pains. Sufferers who have to pay the penalty of stomach acid pains, indigestion, gas pains, heartburn, burning sensation, bloat and other conditions caused by excess acid should try a 25c box of Udga Tablets. They must help or money refunded. At drug stores everywhere.

MYSTERIOUS DEVICE WELDS BRAZES AND SOLDERS
ANYONE CAN OPERATE



Now, an electric welding, brazing and soldering Torch, complete with power unit, goggles and supplies. **Works INSTANTLY off any light socket.** Does a thousand and one repair jobs at amazingly LOW COST on aluminum, iron, steel and other metals. **Indispensable** for Auto, Body and Fender Repairs, and home repairs—shop, factory, farm, engineer, janitor, sheet metal, radio and bicycle repairs. Anyone can handle without previous experience with our simple instructions. 10-DAY HOME TRIAL Write at once for Special Introductory Low Price Offer. Try 3 in 1 Electric Torch for 10 days at our risk, or get one free by helping to introduce it. **ELECTRO-TORCH CO., 2613-MH Michigan Ave., Chicago**

investment, interest, responsibility of ownership and management?"

"I haven't any idea," confessed Nicoletti.

"Thirty-three percent?"

"Why, I suppose that's reasonable—"

"That O. K. with you, McLarnin?" Goldfarb demanded of his brother-in-law.

"I'll not be dictated to!" said McLarnin despondently.

"You'll take it and like it!" Goldfarb said, feeling his authority. "Remember, the convention delegates are packing already. O. K., thirty-three percent off the top to the operators, rest to the help for a ten-day trial period covering the convention."

"I've got to have a guarantee," Nicoletti protested.

"The convention covers all of us!" Goldfarb pointed out. "Now, next point—" Talking with great rapidity and force, Goldfarb hastened on, never giving his listener time to voice objections. The plan, as he saw it, was foolproof and logical. Capital and labor only needed to be brought to a common meeting ground for mutual profit. Neither side had anything to lose.

It was a simple problem in human engineering. The convention furnished sufficient backlog to protect everyone. If the Goldfarb plan failed, hotel employees would have time to secure work elsewhere, since the Florida season had scarcely begun. As for McLarnin, Cody needed help at almost any price, because without a full hotel staff the Manor couldn't open at all and the convention would have to be canceled, resulting in an appreciable loss on the abortive investment—not to mention endless recriminations and unpleasantness between the branches of the McLarnin-Goldfarb family. Goldfarb could even visualize a divorce and he loved his Irish colleen, the vivacious former Peggy McLarnin, almost more than life itself. He was determined to succeed for her.

Goldfarb talked, orated, declaimed, ranted. Finally, in sheer self-defense, Nicoletti was forced to grant Goldfarb a hearing that same night with key union leaders in the county.

STANDING on the platform before an assembly of waiters, cooks, chambermaids, bartenders, and other service complements of the successful resort hotel, Hyman Goldfarb was stupendous.

He envisioned himself as the reconciliator of capital and labor in the Alligator State. Words cascaded from his jerking lips in a veritable Niagara of sound. Addressing the horny-handed lieutenants of labor, Goldfarb seemed to be floating on the surge of the same divine inspiration Bernhardt must have felt before audiences. He coined phrases and metaphors at random, grimaced, mugged, waved, gesticulated eloquently. His repeated references, couched in an endless variety of colorful phrasing, established the "Goldfarb Plan" as a household word.

Finally the lieutenants of labor signified their desire to put the matter to a vote. Goldfarb sat down and prayed. After what seemed an eternity the ballots were collected and the decision made public—

Labor had decided to accept the Goldfarb Plan for a trial period of ten days!

Goldfarb was close to tears!

Resigned to the plan, Cody McLarnin, representing the reluctant forces of capital, dispatched a telegraphic "All Clear, Come Ahead" signal to Thomasheen in Chicago, and promptly collapsed. Goldfarb interned McLarnin with a shift of nurses in a suite on the south wing of White Elephant Manor and seized the multiple reins of control.

There was not a minute to be lost. The delays had cut the time interval down to a few short days and the unattended details were myriad. Goldfarb spent forty-eight hours interviewing chiefs of the dining room, kitchen, room service, bar and maintenance, working on the theory that reliable men in the key positions was the best insurance for success. The hiring of the general staff he left to these trusted, hand-picked assistants. Things went swimmingly. The co-operative feature of the Goldfarb Plan hedged against graft and chicanery.

Goldfarb's imagination, working at white heat, anticipated a hundred details which might easily have been forgotten by a lesser man in the press of final preparations—playing cards for the lounge room, public address system for the convention hall, goldfish for the unstocked ponds. Complete bar stocks arrived and were checked in.

The day before the scheduled opening, Thomasheen McLarnin telephoned from Chicago to advise that the delegates had already begun the trek to Florida from all parts of the country. Two hundred leaders of the embalming industry, all liberally supplied with spending money, one and all assured of the luxurious appointments and unrestricted recreational facilities of White Elephant Manor.

"White Elephant Manor, Incorporated," Goldfarb corrected over the long-distance connection. "A co-operative. Everything is in readiness."

"Splendid. Success depends upon you, Goldfarb. Look to the first impression. Embalmers are not ordinary citizens, understand! If they like the place right off, the sky's the limit. They'll spend their last dollar."

"The cash registers are ready."

"But," warned Thomasheen. "If they get a bad first impression, no telling what they'll do. Pack up and go somewhere else. Leave nothing unatttended the first night. Be sure busses are waiting at the station when the train arrives. Be ready with a great welcome the minute the boys begin to roll in."

"Don't worry," Goldfarb assured his brother-in-law.

"And how's Cody?"

"Resting easily."

"Good. See you myself tomorrow evening—seven o'clock, at the station. No slip-ups." Thomasheen's voice trailed off into the distance.

Goldfarb emerged from the booth to find Nicoletti waiting. Goldfarb continued to effuse confidence and optimism.

"This is a big gamble," Nicoletti said. "If anything goes wrong, I'll be on the pan with national union officials. Probably lose my job."

"The Goldfarb Plan cannot fail!" said Goldfarb. He hastened off to check on final detail. A half dozen sightseeing busses were parked outside, gassed and ready for the twenty-mile haul to the Bay City railroad terminal. In the main dining room a sixteen-piece dance orchestra complete with leader and floor show waited Goldfarb's audition. Goldfarb sat through the rehearsal, making minor suggestions, and ended up by going over details for a noisy and rousing musical reception timed to coincide with the arrival of the busses the next night.

It was well after midnight when Goldfarb retired, to toss in a fitful sleep crowded with a jumble of bright dreams. He could visualize the grand arrival—the causeway festooned with lights that would glitter against the dark water, the light-drenched Mediterranean foyer and sunken lobby of White Elephant Manor, Inc., the rows of uniformed attendants standing at attention as if to welcome a host of visiting diplomats, the band with its noisy fanfares, the delight of the delegates, the magnificent confusion as bellboys hustled their baggage to already assigned rooms while the delegates themselves stampeded toward the bars and grills where the cash registers would hammer out the chorus of Hymie Goldfarb's success song. The Goldfarb Plan would herald a new era in the historic and often bloody struggle between capital and labor.

A thunderous pounding on Goldfarb's door wrenched him out of the sleep of exhaustion into which he had fallen just before dawn. Springing out of bed, he observed it was close to midday. No harm done. He had needed the sleep. It had girded him for the travails of the arrival, the evening and the first days of the convention upon which everything depended.

"Coming!" Goldfarb shouted. "Yes, what is it?" He opened the door.

There was a considerable delegation there. He saw Nicoletti and Cody McLarnin. Nicoletti wore an expression of anguish and unrelieved despair. Cody McLarnin appeared to have suffered a critical relapse and supported himself shakily against the wall. Goldfarb wondered what Cody was doing up out of bed. As the unannounced delegation swept past the pajama-clad Goldfarb, Hymie noted several unfamiliar faces, all of sternest demean.

"What is this?" he demanded again. "A pinch?" Wild fears assailed Goldfarb.

"No," Nicoletti grunted. "The bite."

McLarnin fought for breath and explained weakly. "This bunch of brigands is trying to serve us with a bill against the hotel for last year!"

"So what?" countered Goldfarb. "Did we own the joint last year?"

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," interceded one of the strangers, a pompous man with a hypocritical and well-fed face. "Allow me to introduce myself. I am Chauncey M. Throckmorton, president of the Bayou County Light & Power Co. Be seated please. There's no need for a lot of fuss. What I have to say is simple and to the point—" He cleared his throat and continued:

"For the past several years my concern's experience with owners of this resort has, to put it mildly, been most unfortunate. Each season it seems we found ourselves holding the bag for an appreciable unpaid balance, last year's of more than four thousand dollars being the largest. Since the hotel changes management with the seasons we have been unable to collect our just debts and therefore, must, at this time, resort to a somewhat unpleasant ultimatum."

"Automatum?" shouted Goldfarb. "Listen, we'll pay for what we use. Ain't you turned on the power here two weeks already—"

Throckmorton coughed into a handkerchief. "Well . . . er . . . unhappily, the application just came to the attention of the directors."

"Bunk!" charged Goldfarb. "Lies! Baloney!"

"In any case," stated Throckmorton in a level, self-righteous tone, "we are holding an unpaid bill for four thousand and some odd dollars, which we intend to collect!"

"Why," shouted McLarnin, his temple throbbing, "wasn't this bill entered against the property as a lien?"

Goldfarb answered the question. "Because these goniffs was afraid we wouldn't buy the joint!"

"I beg your pardon!" protested Throckmorton.

"A goniff is Yiddish for thiefs," Goldfarb explained. "You goniff!" He threatened the utility magnate with a fierce-visaged glare and went on. "They

Wear the VITO BELT for 10 days at our expense!

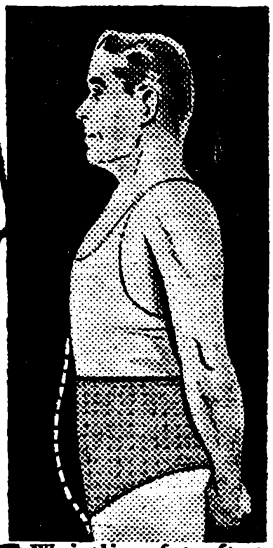
Appear SLIMMER AT ONCE!

DON'T let your friends poke fun at your "bay window"! The successful man of today appears trim-waisted, ready for action . . . streamlined!

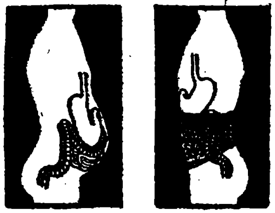
If the Vito Belt does not make that paunchy belt line appear inches slimmer at once . . . it will cost you nothing!

Take care of that ugly paunch the *safe* way . . . with a Vito Belt. Excessive exercise may strain your heart . . . dieting and drugs may be dangerous.

The Vito Belt is made of pure Para rubber, molded to give maximum support. Hundreds of tiny perforations allow air to penetrate. The special lace back permits you to adjust the belt to take care of any change in size. *Illustrated folder and details of 10-day FREE trial offer will be sent in plain envelope on request!*

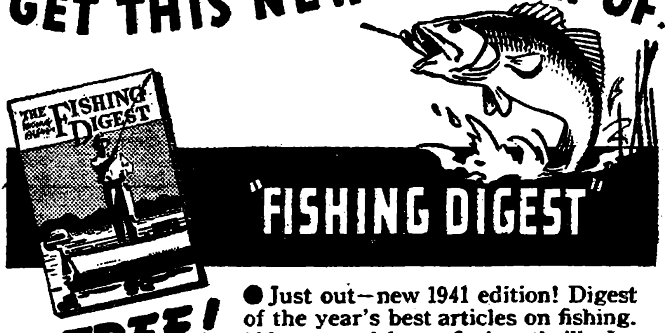


■ Waistline fat often stretches abdominal muscles, allowing stomach and intestines to fall forward and downward. The Vito Belt brings welcome support to strained and sagging internal organs and helps prevent constipation and fatigue.



HAMILTON BELT COMPANY, 363 Hill Street, New Haven, Conn.

GET THIS NEW EDITION OF



● Just out—new 1941 edition! Digest of the year's best articles on fishing. 100 pages of facts, fiction, thrills. Includes chart of world's record catches. Also information on outboard motors. *Sent free! Write*
JOHNSON MOTORS, 1611 Pershing Road, Waukegan, Ill.

★ GET A GOVERNMENT JOB ★

START
$1260 to $2100 Year

Thousands Appointments each year
Prepare now for 1941 examinations.
Men—Women
Mail Coupon today sure.

COUPON

FRANKLIN INSTITUTE, Dept. P 195
Rochester, N. Y.

Sirs: Rush to me without charge (1) 32-page book with list of U. S. Government jobs. (2) Tell me immediately how to qualify for one of these examinations.

Name..
Address.......................................

SUCTION SPONGE
Cleans Cars New Way!
AMAZING INVENTION! Banishes auto-washing drudgery. Cleans linoleum, woodwork, windows like a flash. Auto owners, housewives wild about it. HOT SELLER FOR AGENTS AND DISTRIBUTORS. Hustlers cleaning up big money.
SAMPLE OFFER Samples sent on trial to first person in each locality who writes. No obligation. Get details. *Be first—send in your name TODAY!*
KRISTEE CO., 772 Kristee Bldg., Akron, O.

STOP Itching GET RELIEF This Fast Way -or Money Back
For quick relief from itching of eczema, pimples, athlete's foot, scales, scabies, rashes and other externally caused skin troubles, use world-famous, cooling, antiseptic, liquid D. D. D. Prescription. Greaseless, stainless. Soothes irritation and quickly stops the most intense itching. 35c trial bottle proves it, or money back. Ask your druggist today for D. D. D. PRESCRIPTION.

EARN CASH PROFITS Sell Advertising BOOK MATCHES FREE KIT
WORLD'S LARGEST "DIRECT SELLING" BOOK MATCH FACTORY
Offers you money-making proposition. Beautiful NEW DESIGNS in FIVE and SIX COLORS of ink at ONE COLOR PRICES. Call on all business places; full or part time. No experience necessary to start. No investment. Men or women. High quality, quick deliveries boost sales. Profitable repeats. Kit, complete instructions FREE. Write today. MATCH CORPORATION OF AMERICA
3433-43 W. 48th Pl. Dept. SSM4 Chicago, U. S. A.

INDIGESTION
may affect the Heart
Gas trapped in the stomach or gullet may act like a hair-trigger on the heart. At the first sign of distress smart men and women depend on Bell-ans Tablets to set gas free. No laxative but made of the fastest-acting medicines known for acid indigestion. If the FIRST DOSE doesn't prove Bell-ans better, return bottle to us and receive DOUBLE Money Back. 25c at all drug stores.

Read "PIC"
Covering the entire field of entertainment
theater . . . .
movies . . . .
sports . . . .
with more brilliant pictorial, exciting features than are found in any other picture magazine. Comes out every other Friday—10c a copy.
"PIC"
Published by Street & Smith

waited until we bought the joint—even turned on the juice for bait. Now they're cracking down on us at the last possible minute—at eleven o'clock. Ain't it?"

"I think you mean the eleventh hour, Mr. Goldfarb," said Throckmorton maliciously. "Your way of stating the situation is somewhat crude, but—to the point."

"You goniff!" repeated Goldfarb.

"What's to be done?" Nicoletti demanded in despair. "The convention arrives in a few hours."

Throckmorton smiled. "No pay, no lights," said he, revealing that the power concern was in full possession of business details pertaining to the Manor's opening.

"It's outrageous!" said McLarnin.

"Four G's," said Goldfarb. "We could install a private light system, I betcha!" Turning his back on the delegation, Goldfarb put through several telephone calls and soon had two rival companies bidding on installation figures for a lighting plant. As Goldfarb guessed, a modern outfit could be obtained complete for a good deal less than the electric bill, approximately fifteen hundred dollars to be exact. However, the closest firm was in Jacksonville and installation at the earliest possible date, even working crews on a twenty-four-hour basis and rushing factory parts by plane, could not be effected in less than four days.

"Mr. Goldfarb, you're just wasting time," Throckmorton interrupted. "Valuable time. We are in possession of all these facts. After all, we didn't come here unprepared. I repeat, this is a somewhat unpleasant duty, but the interests of the stockholders must be protected!"

Goldfarb was holding his head. "It shouldn't happen to a Labrador retriever!" he wailed.

"Either pay up, or don't open," repeated Throckmorton, reaching for his hat.

"Have you four thousand dollars on hand?" Nicoletti asked the distressed McLarnin.

This was too much for the representative of capital. "I haven't, and if I had I wouldn't pay. I repeat that for the benefit of these gentlemen!" McLarnin's voice was dripping with venom. "This is the baldest case of brigandry I have ever heard of. Outrageous, unmitigated effrontery." McLarnin was trembling. "We simply won't open, that's all. I'll take a loss rather than accede to such demands, to such brigandry!"

"Goniffery!" Goldfarb coined.

"Think of the employees downstairs!" Nicoletti pleaded.

"Be damned to your employees!" McLarnin yelled hoarsely. "Be damned to all of you. Goldfarb, wire the convention train. Tell them to go elsewhere. Call the whole thing—" That was as far as McLarnin got before he collapsed again.

With a gesture, Goldfarb commanded the angel of White Elephant Manor, Inc., to be carried back to his suite. Peeling off his pajama tops, Goldfarb announced, "I'm in charge now."

"We should be happy to continue negotiations with you, Mr. Goldfarb," Throckmorton said placatingly.

"Get out before I lose my temper, you snake in the grass, you . . . you!" Goldfarb tore a handful of hair from the mat on his chest and waved one fist. The utility delegation beat a hasty retreat.

"Goldfarb, can you raise the money?" Nicoletti inquired.

"My friend," said Goldfarb, reaching for a clean shirt, "get on that phone. Call the Ephrem Company in Jacksonville. They were the lowest bidder. Order one Ephrem heavy-duty electric-power outfit, model B, series 28, complete, installed as soon as possible, C. O. D."

"That's going to be four days!" Nicoletti protested.

"Order it!" Wrapping a gaudy tie, Goldfarb hastened downstairs. There he was confronted by practically the entire staff of the hotel who had evidently heard rumors of the critical conference taking place upstairs and interpreted the huffy exit of the utility magnates as the death knell of all hopes.

Once again Hymie Goldfarb rose to the oratorical heights. "Workers—brothers!" Goldfarb shouted. "Trust me! Trust Goldfarb! The Goldfarb Plan will not fail. Give me four hours, five at the outside. Meanwhile to your appointed stations. Carry on!" Leaping down from a balcony like an admiral quitting a bridge, Goldfarb hastened to the garage and seized the wheel of the station wagon parked there. He overtook the machine carrying the power directors on the causeway. Fighting down an almost overwhelming impulse to spill the car and its contemptible human freight into the lagoon, Goldfarb settled for merely screening it under a deluge of gravel and, pressing heavily on the accelerator, sped away into the afternoon.

THE waters of the Atlantic had turned from blue to purple with the last rays of the setting sun and were just changing into an unrelieved black when the station wagon, with Goldfarb sawing the wheel like a racing driver, slued around the curved roadway leading to the bluff and came rocketing across the causeway.

"Help! Assistance!" shouted Goldfarb, skidding to a stop in clouds of dust. "Men with strong backs! Bellboys! Porters!"

As employees streamed from the entrance, Goldfarb gaspingly indicated the innumerable cartons and boxes with which the station wagon was loaded. Some bore trade-marks of a local novelty company, others of a nearby ship chandlery, still others of a nationally-known firm specializing in Halloween goods. Willing hands began to break these containers from the station wagon and carry them into the Manor.

"The busses!" Goldfarb cried, pointing weakly at the empty vehicles chartered for the opening but now standing idly in the courtyard. "Why ain't they sent already?"

"We didn't—we weren't—" Nicoletti tried to explain.

"Silence!" ordered Goldfarb imperiously. "Man those busses. Ain't it nearly seven p. m. already!" Then an idea seemed to galvanize Goldfarb. "Wait!" Hymie rushed into the hotel. In a moment the sixteen-piece band appeared and at his direction began piling into one of the busses with their instruments. Goldfarb whispered hasty instructions to the band leader and soon the busses were chugging away into the night toward the depot.

They were hardly out of sight before Goldfarb had taken up his position of command on the balcony immediately inside the hotel. From this vantage point he jerked out orders in the staccato fashion of a commander-in-chief directing the complicated operations of a vast army going into battle. Supervised by lieutenants, his soldiers ran about with boxes and cartons, with chairs and step ladders. As darkness, closing in with the terrible rapidity of the tropics, enveloped the scene the confusion was terrible. It seemed that Goldfarb had hardly mounted the balcony before a telephone call summoned him. It was from the Bay City station. The delegates had arrived, two hundred strong, wallets bulging, professing an eagerness for bright lights and revelry, and at the very moment were being loaded into the busses.

"Take 'em the long way around!" ordered Goldfarb. "No, don't—bring 'em on! Forty minutes? Less? No matter. O. K." Goldfarb hung up.

Soon his barked commands had redoubled activity within the dark sunken lobby of the Manor. Here and there a dim yellow light appeared, flickered, glowed feebly, casting grotesque shadows across the nightmarish scene.

Hymie Goldfarb was illuminating White Elephant Manor, Inc., by means of candles! He had purchased thousands of them—every available candle and taper in the surrounding four counties of Florida! The candles gave the Manor, with its already heavy Spanish style decorations, a forbidding and cavernous appearance.

But this was not all!

Goldfarb was not attempting to minimize this effect. He was deliberately adding to it!

Dozens of pairs of hands were even now decorating the walls with all manner of ominous and funereal devices—jack-o'-lanterns, black cats, grinning skulls, dangling skeletons, witches, broomsticks, sheeted ghouls and hobgoblins. Braziers of ruddy fire glowed in various corners of the bulding. The Manor resembled a tableau torn from the pages of Dante. It was a scene capable of inspiring the most morbid and sinister thoughts.

The ecstatic expression of a mural artist upon viewing for the first time his completed work crept over the homely features of Hymie Goldfarb as he directed the finishing touches to be placed on his masterpiece. The flickering yellow light gave his face a satanic cast. His lips curved in a thin smile as he heard the groaning of the busses in the courtyard without and the opening strains of the Funeral March which he had ordered played at this moment by the sixteen-piece band. Goldfarb struck a gong, whose brassy vibrations floated through the hotel. Ladders were quickly withdrawn and shock troops, decked out according to Goldfarb's orders, replaced the exhausted decorators. At the head of these forces, Goldfarb approached and threw open the main door.

Already the band, pumping furiously at its ghoulish music, had formed two rows of men marking time and between these rows walked the two hundred delegates, some carrying luggage, all completely bewildered.

A frowning individual, easily identified as Thomasheen McLarnin, accosted Goldfarb, demanding, "What's the meaning of this extraordinary reception?"

"Goldfarb's taken leave of his senses!" stuttered Cody McLarnin, who had risen from his sick bed but who fortunately passed for a prop ghost under the confusion of the moment.

MECHANICS
KNOW YOUR CAR
You Need this Book
JUST OUT!
AUDELS NEW AUTO GUIDE FOR MECHANICS OPERATORS SERVICEMEN A READY REFERENCE
New Fluid Drive Fully Explained!
Ask to See it!
Every operator and mechanic needs AUDELS NEW AUTO GUIDE. This book saves time, money and worry. Highly endorsed. It presents the whole subject of auto mechanics: 1—Basic principles, 2—Construction, 3—Operation, 4—Service, 5—Repair. Easily understood. Over 1500 pages—1540 illustrations showing inside views of modern cars, trucks and buses with instructions for all service jobs. Diesel Engines fully treated, fully illustrated. To Get This Assistance for Yourself Simply Fill In and Mail Coupon Today.
$4 COMPLETE • PAY ONLY $1. A MONTH ←
THEO. AUDEL & CO., 49 WEST 23rd STREET, NEW YORK
Please send me postpaid AUDELS NEW AUTOMOBILE GUIDE ($4) for free examination. If I decide to keep it, I will send you $1 within 7 days; then remit $1 monthly until purchase price of $4 is paid. Otherwise, I will return it to you promptly.
Name ____
Address ____
Occupation ____
Reference ____ SS42

GET THIS BOOK FREE!
HIGH LIGHTS OF FISHIN'
"HIGH LIGHTS OF FISHIN'"
● 60-page, pocket size book on fishing. Written by M.W. Burlingame, noted angling authority. Not theory—but tried, proven methods and means for day and night fishing, casting, trolling, still fishing. A guide book every beginner and old timer can use. Sent *free!* Write to DELTA ELECTRIC CO., 350 W. 33rd St., Marion, Ind.

FILLED WITH AIR. No more hard, unyielding pads since invention of Brooks Air Cushion.
The Double Inguinal Appliance is as comfortable to wear as a soft belt yet gives firm support.
Send a Postcard for FREE Book on Rupture
STOP YOUR Rupture Worries! See This Perfected Rupture Invention
Why worry and suffer any longer? Learn about our perfected invention for all forms of reducible rupture in men, women and children. Support fitted with automatic air cushion assists Nature in a natural strengthening of the weakened muscles. Thousands made happy. Weighs but a few ounces, is inconspicuous and sanitary. No stiff springs or hard pads. No salves or plasters. Durable, cheap. SENT ON TRIAL to prove it. Beware of imitations. Never sold in stores or by agents. Write today for full information and Free Book on Rupture. All correspondence confidential.
BROOKS APPLIANCE COMPANY, 408-G State Street, Marshall, Mich.

Classified Advertising

Patents Secured

INVENTORS—Don't delay. Protect your idea with a Patent. Secure "Patent Guide" and "Record of Invention" form—Free. Preliminary information furnished without obligation. Write Clarence A. O'Brien, Registered Patent Attorney, 1D51 Adams Building, Washington, D. C.

INVENTORS—Delays are dangerous—Secure patent protection now: Get new Free copyrighted booklet, "How To Protect Your Invention." No charge for preliminary information. McMorrow and Berman. Registered Patent Attorneys, 151-D Barrister Building, Washington, D. C.

INVENTORS:—HAVE YOU a sound, practical invention for sale, patented or unpatented? If so, write Chartered Institute of American Inventors, Dept. 42, Washington, D. C.

PATENTS—Reasonable terms. Book and advice free. L. F. Randolph, Dept. 513, Washington, D. C.

PATENTS SECURED. Two valuable booklets sent free. Write immediately. Victor J. Evans & Company, 424-D Victor Building, Washington, D. C.

Photo Finishing—Developing

FREE—ONE ROLL DEVELOPED AND PRINTED FREE. Just to get acquainted, we will beautifully develop and print your first 6 to 16 exposure roll Free plus 5x7 inch enlargement Free, also sensational, new folding folio to frame your prints, all free with this ad. (Enclosing 10c for handling and mailing appreciated.) Dean Studios, Dept. 1024, Des Moines, Iowa.

8 ENLARGEMENTS AND FILM DEVELOPED, 116 size or smaller, 25c coin; enlarged prints 3c each; special offer: enclose advertisement and negative for hand-colored enlargement free with order 25c or more. Enlarge Photo, Box 791, Dept. SS, Boston, Mass.

ROLL DEVELOPED 16 prints, or 8 prints 2 enlargements, or 8 - 4x6 enlargements 25c. Credit for unprintable negatives. Reprints 2c. 100—$1.00. Include this ad for free surprise. Peerless Studio, Great Northern Bldg., Chicago.

Old Money Wanted

OLD MONEY WANTED. Will pay $100.00 for 1894 Dime, S Mint., $50.00 for 1913 Liberty Head Nickel (not Buffalo). Big premiums paid for all rare coins. Send 4c for Large Coin Folder. May mean much profit to you. B. Max Mehl, 440 Mehl Bldg., Fort Worth, Texas.

Detectives—Instructions

DETECTIVES EARN BIG MONEY. WORK HOME. TRAVEL. DETECTIVE particulars free. Experience unnecessary. Write GEORGE WAGONER, 2640-A Broadway, New York.

Correspondence Courses

CORRESPONDENCE courses and educational books, slightly used. Sold. Rented. Exchanged. All subjects. Satisfaction guaranteed. Cash paid for used courses. Complete details and bargain Catalog Free. Write Nelson Company, 500 Sherman, Dept. D-215, Chicago.

Help Wanted—Instructions

NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN. No canvassing. No investment. Earn up to $23 weekly and your own dresses Free. Write fully giving age, dress size. Fashion Frocks, Dept. DD-1023, Cincinnati, O.

SELL TO EVERY BUSINESS Absolute Necessities—over 2,000 items. Lowest prices. Beats competition. Commissions advanced. Experience unnecessary. Samples Free. Federal, 301-BF South Desplaines, Chicago.

Old Gold Wanted

GOLD—$35 OUNCE. Ship old gold teeth, crowns, jewelry, watches—receive cash by return mail. Satisfaction Guaranteed. Free information. Paramount Gold Refining Co., 1500-G Hennepin, Minneapolis, Minn.

Nurses Training Schools

MAKE UP TO $25-$35 WEEK as a trained practical nurse! Learn quickly at home. Booklet Free. Chicago School of Nursing, Dept. D-3, Chicago.

Miscellaneous

ADDRESSES MOVIE STARS, DIRECTORS, PRODUCERS. Any resident in the Hollywood district, single address reports 50c. Special prices on mailing lists. Write for information. Hollywood Directory Service, Dept. S1, 249 North Larchmont, Hollywood, Cal.

Coins—Old Money

GET PROFIT and PLEASURE in collecting old coins. Send 10c for 56-page illustrated coin catalog. You'll be delighted with it. Send for it now. B. Max Mehl, 255 Mehl Building, Fort Worth, Texas. Largest rare coin establishment in U. S. Established 41 years.

Books

READ "THE AWAKENING," by Melvin L. Severy. Amazing Love Revelation. Unique . . . Unforgettable. Just published. Limited Edition. Mail $2.50 money order today Foster Hope Co., Publishers, 541 South Spring, Los Angeles, California.

Magic Tricks, Novelties

MINDREADING via TELEPHONE! Astonishing entertainment mystifies. Never fails. Secret & Cards 25c. Papp, Box 432, Worcester, Mass.

Smiling, Goldfarb drew the brothers aside, signing that the delegates should enter, and without fear. A platoon of bell boys, attired in bed sheets, instantly attempted to relieve them of their luggage. Beyond, two dozen scandalously-garbed bartenders, dancing like animated skeletons, and waving cocktail shakers and beckoning furiously, invited the delegates within.

There were groans, cries of fear, muttered prayers. Some of the less sober arrivals dropped to their knees and began crossing themselves. Then, suddenly, a tall, red-faced County Leitrim man, who wore the look of a professional mourner, let out a whoop: "Sure, an' the spalpeen's are only foolin' an' mean no harm. Wisha, 'tis positively sh-inister, that's w'at"—and made a beeline for the bar.

Surrendering their luggage, the delegates began a pell-mell stampede for the barrooms. The orchestra followed, tootling lustily, improvizing on the funeral march now. Within twenty minutes While Elephant Manor, Inc., was a bedlam over which the metallic clanging of the cash registers could be heard at split-second intervals. Men yelled, shouted, scolded the overworked bartenders for fresh drinks, laughed, gathered for quartets, or sat staring admiringly at the decorations.

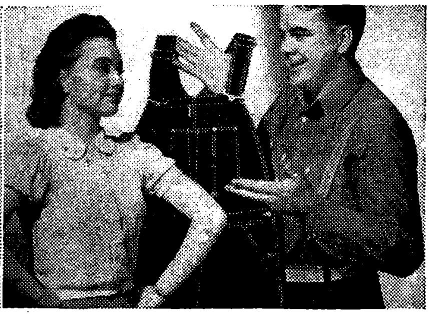
Hymie Goldfarb was hauled ceremoniously to a vantage spot to hear the fulsome praise of a spokesman who concluded finally, "Goldfarb, again I shake your hand. You are more than a hotel-keeper. You are a prophet. Sir, what an inspiration!"

"Thank you," said Goldfarb modestly. "The next drink is on the house." Surveying his public, he proclaimed Shakespearianlike, "Now, let joy be unrefined!"

THE END.

"It Was Costing Us Dollars To Save a Few Dimes!"

BOY, WERE WE LUCKY WHEN I DISCOVERED THIS EASY NEW WAY TO SAVE MONEY!..



"I Used To Always Buy Cheap Overalls to save money, until one day I saw Lee's big money-back guarantee. I couldn't lose — so I purchased a pair!

"I Never Knew What Overall-Comfort Was till I started working in my tailored-size Lee Overalls. They always fit perfectly — no binding, no bagging!

"And It Didn't Take Martha Long To Discover that Jelt Denim *really* wears! Lee may cost a few extra pennies, but it saves us *dollars* in the long run!"

MEN! Try a pair of Lee Overalls yourself! See how Lee tailored sizes give you extra fit, looks, and comfort—how the famous Jelt Denim, used ONLY in Lee Overalls, gives you extra long wear!...

Then if you don't say Lee is the finest money-saving overall you've ever worn—your Lee Dealer will give your money back, or a new pair free!

You can't lose—see your nearest Lee Dealer now!

UNION MADE

Lee

OVERALLS

Made of Genuine Jelt Denim

Free! Mail postcard for free "Tiny Lee" (clever die-cut overall sample of Jelt Denim); also free illustrated folder, and name of nearest Lee dealer!

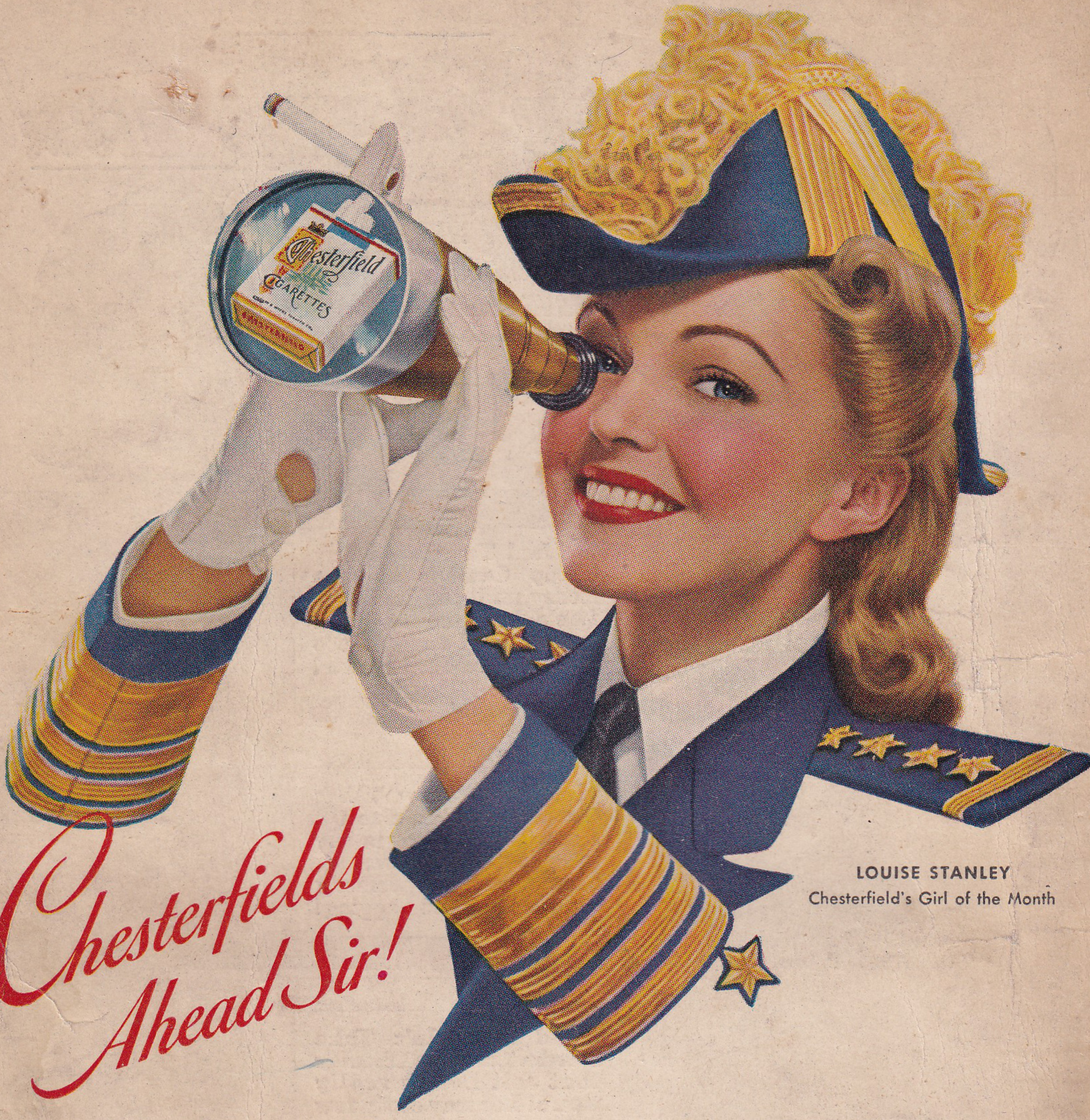
THE H. D. LEE MERC. CO., Dept. AF-4

Kansas City, Mo. Minneapolis, Minn. Trenton, N. J.
South Bend, Ind. San Francisco, Calif. Salina, Kans.

TAILORED SIZES
SANFORIZED-SHRUNK*

*Fabric Shrinkage Less Than 1

W4102



LOUISE STANLEY
Chesterfield's Girl of the Month

Chesterfields Ahead Sir!

Ahead for MILDNESS... for BETTER TASTE and COOLER SMOKING

...that's what smokers want these days and Chesterfields are quick to give it with their right combination of the world's best cigarette tobaccos... They Satisfy.

Everywhere you look you see those friendly white packages... it's the smoker's cigarette.

CHESTERFIELD

Copyright 1941, Liggett & Myers Tobacco Co.